Tibbie & Tam

By J. Wilson M'Laren

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/tibbietam0000jwil

Tibbie and Tam

Of this Edition only 150 Copies have been printed.

To

THOMAS LILLIE,

in

"The Cold City of the North,"

For Auld Langsyne.

TIBBIE'S BALLOON VOYAGE.

TIBBIE & TAM

OR THE

Upcomes, Dooncomes, and Ongauns o' TWA CANNIE SCOTS

BY

J. WILSON M'LAREN,

Author of "Scots Poems and Ballants," "Rhymes frae the Chimla Lug," etc.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

EDINBURGH:

J. T. BAILLIE, PRINTER AND PUBLISHER, 5 NICOLSON SQUARE.

1894

To a' Concerned.

IT behooves me to admit that ae nicht, aboot a towmont sin', it was suggested in a pawky way, by my auld respected cronie, Tammas MacCrowdie that I micht wi' propriety collect his family documents and domestic diary, syne put them in a literary form for publication, and by that means prove him worthy o' the warl's kindly nod. The idea, like a guid haggis, I thocht digeestible, and forthwith proceeded on a rummagin' search for scraps o' genealogical history, and reminiscences anent the twa cannie Scots, in connection wi' their married life, until Tibbie began to assume matronly airs ower the hoosehald, and rule Tam into the bargain—withoot distinction o' paternal dignity amang the filials! In my howkin' amang love screeds, locks o' hair, and lapsed policies o' frien'ly burial societies, I gathered as mony particulars as wad mak' a stirrin' biography, and sat me doon to prove to generations yet unborn, that thae played an eventfu' part in ilka-day life no' unworthy o' public celebrity; sae I trust the truthfu' record may be mair palatable to a' concerned than Tibbie's tongue was to Tammas MacCrowdie.

Contents.

	PAGE
Tibbie's Balloon Voyage,	9
The Hoose Takin',	17
A Veesit to the Waxwork,	28
Tibbie's Valentine,	37
A Theatrical Scot,	44
Tammas MacCrowdie's Elopement,	53
Tibbie's Veesit to Lunnon,	62
Tibbie's Triumphant Return,	71
The Gowff Craze,	80
May Dew,	88
A Munelicht Flittin',	97
Hughie Elshin's Majority,	107
The Curin' o' Mysie Chalmers,	114
Hughie Elshin's Waddin',	122

Tibbie's Balloon Voyage.

LOSH preserve us! but the ingenuity o' mortal man is horrifyin', and the heroic valour and inqueesitiveness o' woman—in general—extraordinary.

The fame o' the Auld Reekie Exhibition was warld-wide, and, withoot boastin', it behoves me to admit that the better-hauf o' my respected cronie, Tammas MacCrowdie, is no "a flower to blush unseen, nor waste her sweetness on the desert air."

Since the nicht o' Tibbie's stirrin' speech at the Convention o' Anti-crinolinists, withoot ae word o' a lee, Tam's no' haen an 'oor's peace o' mind owin' to the magnitude o' the screeds that arrive wi' ilka post; and at the present time he is negotiatin' for the assistance o' a private secretary.

Some o' the epistles, baith as regards caligraphy and diction, wad turn gray the hair o' ony mortal man's heid—here I may state, for the guid o' them wha haena seen his picture, that Tam's hairs are few and far between, and consequently the full effect is no' discernible to the anxious ee.

Weel, amang the twa hunner and fifty-four brain-

burners whilk the postman was foolish eneuch to deliver last week, saxteen contained offers o' marriage to Tibbie whenever—dare I say sadly and unwillingly ?—Tam was laid beside the rest o' his honoured ancestors. Four cam' frae itinerant Italian stucca-image vendors, wantin' a cast o' her leddyship's heid. Ithers frae bankrupt photographers, autograph collectors, Barnumites, etc., etc., etc. Of course, like Auld Wullie, the Marquis, and ither prominent members o' oor great leegislative body, he endeavoured to tak' nae notice o' thae dynamite bombs, but when ane's jealous propensities frae infancy hae stood extremely high, it's whiles nae easy job ; hooever, we'll say nae mair on that topic at the present time, but turn to the ane oot o' the hale twa hunner and fifty-four whilk put Tam's financial frien', philosopher, and better-hauf into a state o' excitement, whilk I was certain wad be detrimental to her perceptive faculties afore lang. This wonnerfu' epistle had a' the official airs aboot it, and was frae nae less a personage than the renowned A-E-R-O-N-A-U-T—'O'd, what a word!—o' the Exhibition, conveyin' an offer to tak' Tibbie up in his balloon on the followin' day ! Here was *killin'* kindness, indeed ! Anither unthocht o' and dangerous amusement destined to play havoc wi' Tam's already heavily-burdened mind.

That Tibbie wad accept o' the captain's generosity he was sune convinced, for in a deeply-emotional voice, and at the same time dichtin' the tears o' joy frae her een wi' the wat dishcloot, she said :

" Hech, surse ! I've haen mony guid and novel offers in my time, but this dings them a'. When a bit lassie, I mind weel o' seein' and envyin' a birkie wha gaed aff at

Heriot's wark, little thinkin' then that I'd hae the same preevilege afore I dee'd. Dod! it's worth ane's while to trauchle saxty towmonts alang the road o' life if there's a chance when near the end o' gettin' sic a guid hoist. Writin' to the papers anent the watery condition o' the gas, o'd, Tammas! here's subject-matter for ye o' far greater and *higher* importance, sae kindly record the fact!"

"Afore the morn's nicht I'll maybe hae to record your *death*, guidwife, sae dinna be sae jocular," he reiterated.

Seeing that Tibbie's mind was fully made up to gang the "jaunt," as she termed it, that nicht Tam set oot for the venerable abode o' Andro Elshin, to acquaint him o' the facts, and solicit his advice and consolation. Unfortunately Andro wasna at hame. "Like the police o' late," said Mattie, "he is takin' a great interest in the public's welfare, and noo ilka nicht he's oot on the hunt for unmuzzled dowgs, whilk he brings hame and afterwards sells, thus adding something respectable to his rather sma' income ilka week. Of course," she slyly added, "there's nae risk; it's quite leegitimate."

Whether or no', Tam didna feel inclined to stey and argue the point, sae after giein' her instructions aboot haein' Andro alang to the Exhibition the following afternoon, at three o'clock, slowly and sadly he returned hame.

The horrifyin' nichtmares Tam was subject to afore he slept baffles a' description. That Tibbie had totally eclipsed Jules Verne in *her* voyage to the mune he was certain; and when daylicht broke 'twas joy o' joys!

Durin' the forenoon there was naething but bustle and

confusion. Neebors cam' and neebors gaed. Twa representatives o' the press interviewed Tibbie at great length, and afore takin' their departure offered three-happence a line for ony description o' the voyage she micht supply. Tibbie was elated, promised to acquiesce, and presented each wi' her autograph, in pencil, and a string o' her mutch as mementos! Up to this time Tam had scarcely opened his mooth, but as the 'oor drew nigh he ventured to speir if she was gaun to take' onything wi' her.

"Naething, Tammas, but Baudrons, wha, like mysel', is muckle in need o' *a change o' air!*"

"What! ye dinna mean to say ye're gaun to tak' Baudrons up in the man's balloon?"

"That's my intention, and what for no'?" she asked as she surveyed hersel' in the glass. "Wad *you* like to gang, Tammas?"

"Na, feth; but I'll be there to see ye aff."

"As regards that, I'm rather independent this time, for thoosands'll be there withoot ye. I indorse the sentiments o' the clever chiel in the *Mikado* wha sings 'Ye'll never be missed.'"

Thus the colloquy gaed on until the wag-at-the-wa' indicated that the 'oor o' departure had arrived. Wi' a deep sigh for his heid-strong better-hauf, Tam got Baudrons into a pock, syne on his back, and followed her leddyship doon the stair.

As thae passed alang the streets, thae were confronted at ilka turn by birkies wi' broads afore and ahint them, whilk announced in airm-lang letters that the renowned Tibbie MacCrowdie wad ascend—weather permitting or no'—at three-fifteen! Inwardly Tam kent she had often

ascended high eneuch mair ways than ane, and as thae gaed alang, he reminded her o' the fact, and endeavoured, wi' as muckle tender eloquence as he deemed manly, to gar her desist this hazardous and death-defyin' undertakin', but it was a' o' nae avail.

"Just think o' the disappointment the folk wad get if I didna gang up, Tammas!"

"Weel, ye ochtna to tak' things in haun' sae rashly," he retorted.

"Atweel, I promise this'll be the last," and wi' that thae entered the grounds o' the Exhibition.

In an instant baith were recognised by the crood, and a passage was cleared for them to get to the aerial monster whilk was noddin' in a' directions.

"That's Mrs MacCrowdie and her *assistant*, wi' a pock o' proveesions;" "Surely she's gaun a lang journey?" and "Weel dune the auld ane!" were expressions that gaed frae mouth to mouth.

Sir Jeemes Gowans was the first to shake hauns wi' Tibbie; then cam' Mary Queen o' Scots, wha condescended to sell funny squeekin' dolls at saxpence each, in Auld Edinburgh; and wha wished her a' success on the journey.

Durin' thae necessary preleeminaries Tam had keepit his een aboot him and could see that the folk were gettin' impatient ower the delay, and that the barricades didna look as if they'd be able to support the pressure muckle langer, sae drappin' the pock wi' Baudrons in't frae aff his back, to protect himsel' if necessary, to the horror and consternation o' a', it began to move alang the ground. This didna escape the een o' the onlookers, and in an instant there was a general stampede a' ower the place.

Auld leddies fented in dizzens; young anes screiched, and fell into the airms o' ony chiel wha was willin' eneuch to support them; and but for the great presence o' mind o' ane o' the Executive, wha got on the roof o' the Café and in a lood voice cried, "For ony sake, dinna rin awa'! The pock contains naethin' but a harmless reptile whilk Mistress MacCrowdie, as a member o' the *Felinealogical* Society, intends takin' up in the balloon for scientific purposes"—there micht hae been a serious *cat*-astrophe! As I've said, this had the desired effect. The cowards again taen up their positions, and Tibbie, wha had seated hersel' in the car while this unlooked-for incident attracted my attention, was noo joined by the captain, wha gied the signal to let go, and as cheer after cheer rent the air, the "Edina" rose majestically frae the ground. Hoo Tam then felt I canna describe, but I ken that tears were in his een; and as I looked up there stood Tibbie smilin' to perfection, wi' ane o' Stewart's tippence-happeny Union Jack hankies in the ae haun', and a muckle pock o' sand in the ither. Mechanically Tam lifted his bannet to salute her, and that she recognised him there's no' a doot, for immediately the pock was let frae her grasp, and intentionally or no' I canna say—it landed richt on my auld frien's heid, and, like a hunnerweicht o' coal, he drappit insensible on the ground.

* * * * * *

When Tam opened his een he found himsel' at hame in bed, and there was Andro Elshin's wife, like a true ministerin' angel, at the fireside busy coverin' Tibbie's face wi' stickin' plaster! Masterin' as muckle strength as he possessed, Tam speired hoo she liked the journey, and to

oor surprise, she replied, "Fine, Tammas; but the quick dooncome was the warst o't;" and in a tone o' voice in whilk the element o' repentance conspicuously shone, she gied us a graphic description o' the regions aboon. Tam then questioned her aboot Baudrons and his behaviour.

"Ah, puir Baudrons!" she sighed; "a' gaed richt wi' him until we cam' in sicht o' what the captain thocht was a gentleman's estate. 'Here!' he cried, in great glee, 'we'll land, and be in time for dinner,' and pu'in' a bit string I felt a strange sensation, syne on lookin' ower the car saw we were aboot twa feet frae the ground. Baudrons noticin' *terra firma* as weel's mysel', made ae spring, and I was dauft eneuch to mak' a grab at him as he disappeared ower the side, wi' the result that he taen me alang wi' him! And wad ye believe it, Tammas, he was aff like a puff o' pouther, leavin', like Tam o' Shanter's mare, his tail ahint him,"

"What!" Tam ejaculated, and at the same time startin' up in the bed; "dae ye mean to say ye've lost and deprived Baudrons o' that usefu' commodity—his tail?"

"Ay, Tammas!" she replied, muckle affected, "but that's no' the warst o't. When the captain got oot the car and speired at a wheen birkies, wha had gathered roun', wha the big estate belanged to, ane o' them, wi' a wicked leer, said, 'This is no' a gentleman's estate ava. It's CRAIGLOCKHART PUIRSHOOSE!!!' The captain nearly fented on the spot, but sune recoverin', he packed up his balloon, and as we were makin' a hasty retreat aff the ground an auld leddy, to show, as she said, her hospitality, and prove that there was nae ill-feelin' even to balloonists, haunded us an aicht-ounce bap and a bowl o' soor dook!"

Tibbie's sudden fa' in the warld has been as quick as her rise, and to stop the pawky representatives o' the press frae enlargin', burlesquin', and highly colourin' a subject sad and severe, and as a warnin' to heidstrong women, I write the truth, the hale truth, and naethin' but the truth.

The Hoose Takin'.

AY, what dae ye think? Nae less than a *grander* hoose; as if the ane my auld frien' Tam MacCrowdie has occupied for saxteen years isna guid eneuch. I'm inclined to think Tibbie's gettin' conceited in her auld age, but I doot he'll curb her fancifu' notions.

Heth! I'm sair eneuch fashed wi' police-tax, puirs-rates, street ministrels, organ-grinders, and a hunner ither vexatious burdens, withoot haein' mair rent to pey, and whaur can she afford it I'd like to ken?

Sic a woman I never heard the like o'!—in fact, the langer I leeve I'm the firmer convinced that in less than a towmont she'd drive into the manacles o' bankruptcy ony American millionaire! She's aye schemin' and plannin', and to sic a large extent, that it's really horrifyin'! Tam's sma' means she devours wi' an avidity that's disgracefu'; and he hasna as muckle on a Monday mornin' as wad buy a pouther for a moutin' canary!—deed no; and as for peyin' a veesit occasionally to that beneficial institution, the playhoose, to revel in the depicted warks o' Wullie Shakespeare, as we used to dae in the sweet days o' auld langsyne, it's oot o' the question

a'thegither. Nae wonner the folk are takin' notice o' things and ca'in Tam MacCrowdie hen-pecked. Thae're richt, and I'm forced to confess it; but a day o' reckonin's at haun', sae let his guidwife Tibbie prepare!

That Mysie Chalmers, their next-door neebor, is at the bottom o' a' thae new-fangled on-gauns, I haena the shadow o' a doot. She's a perfect pest, and aye adveesin' and suggestin' things to ither folk when she ocht to be lookin' at hame, the idle, extravagant, stravaigin' hizzie that she is; and her latest blast is a *bigger hoose*, to be paid on the *instalment principle*, whatever that may mean. There na; did ye ever ken the like? Concoctin' plans for my frien's future weelfare, but I'm inclined to put them doon as their immediate ruination! Ghaists at Tam's door every Monday mornin'! Na, na! and I hope he'll tak' care that Mysie Chalmers understaun's his decision. A' alang Tam's telt Tibbie no' to put hersel' to needless labour, as she'll just hae to be content whaur she is, but a' to nae purpose. Her tongue's ne'er at rest frae mornin' to nicht wi' the new hobby. "This hoose is to let, and the next ane's empty," has been her cry the hale week; but that's no the warst o't.

When puir MacCrowdie opens his een at seven o'clock in the mornin' she's oot, sae he has to rise, licht the fire, and mak' breakfast. When dinner time comes he discovers she's been in and awa' again, withoot haein' the sense to put on a gatherin' coal, sae the fire is again oot! That Tibbie's been enjoyin' hersel' he has guid proof, for the savoury odours o' steak, &c. &c. &c., whilk she's been treatin' hersel' to are unmistakable. Even when he

comes hame at nicht it's the auld, auld story—oot!—oot!!—aye oot!!!

Nae wonner Tam's shadow's nae credit to the pavement!—but nae matter; insults and insinuations are naethin' to the tongue and temper whilk mornin', noon, and nicht the ance courageous and heroic frien' o' my youth has to bear.

Atweel, nae farther gane than yestreen Tam was sittin' dowie at the chimla-lug, thinkin' on the mony happy days o' langsyne, when wi' that licht-hearted lot, the Auld Reekie Lawnatarians, he used to speil the auld castle rock, when wha sud abruptly stap in but Tibbie, followed by that abominable Mysie Chalmers.

"Losh! but I'm tired. But hoo's yersel', Tammas?" quo' she, sittin' doon and fauldin' her airms wi' an air o' conscious pride that didna become her ava.

"Oh, weel eneuch, considerin'," grunted Tam, no wishin' to hae ony conversation wi' her, for brawly he kent what wad be the result.

"I'm sure ye ocht to be prood o' Tibbie, wha's lookin' sae muckle to your interest and weelfare."

"And sae I am, sae I am, Mysie," said Tam, in an assumed tone o' gratification, the deception o' whilk nane the twa seemed to tak' ony notice o'.

"That's richt; I'm glad to hear ye say that. Wad that my man had hauf o' your common sense."

"Dod! it's a rale compact wee hoose, and sic a respectable locality too," put in Tibbie; while Tam glowered at her wi' a fierceness that wad hae gar'd her fent had she seen it.

"Sic a reasonable rent, and the use o' the back green

forbye," continued Tam's better-hauf, maistly addressin' her remarks to the next-door neebor, as if he were naebody. "O'd, my duds'll get a guid airin' noo withoot bein' obleeged to ony."

"Wha'd hae thocht ye'd haen sic luxuries in your auld age, Mistress MacCrowdie? No me for ane," approvin'ly remarked Mysie.

"My fegs, you're richt; but I think afore it's ony later that the guidman ocht to gang and hae a glisk at the hoosie."

"What hoose?" roared Tam, fairly up wi' passion. "Is't the puirshoose? for that's the best ane for ye."

"Weel, if this doesna bate cockfechtin' my name's no Mysie Chalmers! D'ye ken what hoose wad suit you, Tammas?"

"Na, nor I dinna care," retorted Tam, wi' a vehemence that brocht the water to his een.

"Weel, I'll tell ye, my guidman, the—*mad*-hoose!" and inwardly chucklin' ower her victory, she raise up and gaed oot.

"What gar'd ye fetch that randy here the nicht?" Tam demanded.

"That's my business, and no yours; but for guidsake bridle your ill-nature and listen to what I've got to say."

"Say your say at ance and be dune wi't, for I maun awa to my bed."

"Bed! my fegs, ye'll dae nae sic thing. Bed at this early oor o' nicht? Na, na, I'll no let ye encourage laziness. Just gie your face a dicht and come awa wi' me and hae a look at the comfortable but-and-ben I've got for ye to stap your fit in at the term. And it's awfu' reasonable —*only* four shullings a week!"

"What!" gasped Tam, "four shullings! Is't no fourpence ye mean? Four shullings! Woman, dae ye want to drive me clean gyte?"

"Oh, but sic a grand view ye'll get o' the shores o' Fife on a bonnie simmer's day," pleaded Tibbie, waxin' eloquent.

"To Freuchie wi' the Fife shores," cried Tam.

"And the land's sae hie and healthy too."

"Hoo hie did ye say?"

"Just twal' storey!"

"Then ye'll be as near the guid place as your acts are deservin' o'!"

Wi' Tibbie's novel description I maun confess that Tam's curiosity was raised a wee; sae after a ten meenits' domestic strategy he consented to gang and inspect the comfortable hoose that his next-door neebor and better-hauf had succeeded in negotiatin' for at a bargain.

The nicht was wat, a lood win' was soughin' doon the Pottie Raw, and when oor sairly persecuted frien' reached the stair-fit he maist hauf rued the promise he had made, and wad hae turned up the stair again, but the thocht o' her never-devalvin' tongue was eneuch. Sae doon the street like a fool Tam gaed, keepin' close in the wake o' her leddyship, although that whiles was nae canny job.

After passin' thro' hauf a dizzen streets, syne wanderin' doon closes and up wynds, she stopt, and liftin' her haun' in the air joyfully exclaimed—

"There it's!"

"What!" quo' Tam, lookin' up and discernin' naething.

"The window, yon's it at the tap in the left haun' corner on the slates."

Tam looked again, but his een failed to fetch onything like a window "at the tap in the left haun' corner on the slates" to view. I'm thinkin' it wad hae taen a rather guid pair o' thae things I ance or twice had the honour o' seein' the gentry use in the playhoose to bring what she was yatterin' aboot within a respectable distance, for the hicht o' the tenement was fearfu' to look up at. At onyrate, Tibbie saw it, and that was everything.

"But we'd better be stappin' up and see what like the inside looks," said Tam, after gazin' at the lift till his neck was sair.

"Come awa', then, guidman," and afore her lawfu' lord and maister kent whaur he was, she gript him firmly by the loof, and began draggin' the dazed fallow alang the darksome passage.

"Tak' care Tibbie," roared Tam, "tak' care. For onysake, mind your feet and gang mair canny."

"Haud your wheesht, ye'll bring oot the neebors."

"Neebors—dae folk leeve here?—I wadna ke——;" but the remainder o' the sentence maun rest in oblivion, for Tam had made a wrang stap somehoo, and felt himsel' disappearin' through a hole in the wudden stairs!

"I'm gaun, Tibbie, save me," roared Tam. Heth! it's a shame to tell it; but facts are facts a' the world ower, and in after years dinna bauther your conscience.

Hooever, I'm glad to say it wasna necessary for Tibbie to get assistance or grapplin' irons, for when her guidman cam' to the waist he stopt gaun ony farther. In fact, Tam was jammed! It was Tibbie's turn noo to gie vent to her grief, but Tam managed to get her to understaun' that he was only hauf awa' wi't. Naturally eneuch she

wanted to get help, but the thocht o' Tammas MacCrowdie bein' found in sic a ludicrous position put nerve into her that I never kent she possessed, and wi' a pu', syne a pech, and anither lang pu'—Tam was at length drawn frae the hole, only to find to his horror that wi' a nail-heid the richt leg o' his guid Sunday breeks was torn frae fit to tap. Sic a dire and irreparable misfortune had ne'er befa'n him afore, and he inwardly wished Tibbie and her hoose under the jurisdiction o' his satanic majesty.

Tam was noo mair determined than ever to see this hoose, and pey her back wi' insults anent it, that wad gar her rue the takin' o't, sae wi' a "Cum' awa', Tibbie, and put aff nae mair time," slowly ascended the stair.

For fully ten meenits thae kept ascendin' in the hope o' reachin' the tap—but the effort proved in vain—sae Tam had to sit doon and tak' a breath.

Sic a gettin' up stairs ! and as for Tibbie, she seemed to hae lastin' powers that were really astonishin', for she quickly passed my frien' wi' disdain, and in a short time her shauchlin fitsteps dee'd awa' in the distance.

Aince mair Tam got on his feet, and thankfully at length reached the tap, whaur stood Tibbie wi' the key in her haun'.

"Is this no awfu' ? " she ejaculated, when Tam reached her side.

"What's the matter noo ? "

"I declare I've cam' awa' withoot the caunle."

"It's just like ye, weel-a-wat ; but there's sma' use o' ye staunin' there like a turnkey if ye haena got a licht to show your grand choice. I dinna ken what like the inside

o't 'll be, but I can speak o' the stair, and I wad suggest that the suner thae get an elevator to tak' folk up and doon the better."

At this juncture a nippin' blast o' win' gar'd Tam's vera legs tremmle aneath him and his teeth yatter sae muckle, that for a while it deprived him o' the use o' his tongue.

"Wh—what are ye g—gaun to dae noo?" he stammered oot.

"I'll try this door, and see if the folk'll gie's a licht," replied Tibbie, naething daunted.

"Then dae sae at ainee and let's awa' hame?" grunted Tam.

Frae the woman Tibbie got a lichted caunle, and openin' the door, in Tam entered, but didna get three staps ower the lintel when a terrible catastrophe taen place.

The hoose whilk Tibbie had ta'en was an auld rickity garret, wi' laigh roof, and Tam no bein' acquainted wi' the fact, nae suner got inside than, to bring his body oot o' the bent position it had been in for the last ten meenits, lifted his heid, and clean through the roof it gaed. Sic a stoun! Tam was certain his neck was twisted oot o' its natural position, and could hae sworn he was gruppit in a trap. Little carin' for neebors or ony body else, Tam roared—

"Help! Murder! Police! police!! police!!!"

Tibbie, nearly oot o' her wits, drapt the caunle, and made an attempt to rescue her unfortunate partner; but that was unfortunate, for she put her fit on what she had let fa', and the next meenit gaed doon wi' a thud on the floor.

THE HOOSE TAKIN'.

To keep ane's heid exposed to the fury o' the elements wasna consistent wi' reason, sae Tam managed to extricate himsel' ; but no afore he lowsed twa or three o' the slates roun' aboot, whilk gaed rumlin' doon, and wi' a clash landed ower into the street. What if some ane had been killed ? was the thocht o' Tam MacCrowdie. Hooever, it didna matter muckle, for he was in a perfect deluge o calamities. Quickly Tibbie was raised to her feet, and dragged mair deid than alive doon the stair, only to be grupt at the fit by a Heelant policeman, wha " kent fat wass wrang prawly !"

Explanations, tears frae Tibbie, and even a guid tip were a' o' nae avail, sae Tam was marched through the streets to the police station, closely followed by a hysterical wifie.

At the office he was charged wi' attemptin' " to tak' ta life o' ta mistress, and flingin' ta cups, ta plates, and ta powls ower ta windy, to ta danger o' ta passers-py."

The sergeant, hooever, was a far-seein' chiel, and after hearin' Tam's way o't, let him aff wi' an admonition.

Tibbie I doot has got a fricht this time, for since then she hasna opened her mou' aboot takin' a hoose, and noo Tam is gettin' peace and mair o' his ain way. This reminds me that bocht wit's the best, if no ower dear—although, hech surse, some pey dear eneuch for't—whilk micht be sae in his case ; hooever, time will tell.

A Veesit to the Waxwork.

WEEL-A-WAT, it's awfu' to think folk canna gang a hunner yards frae hame noo-a-days withoot bein' importuned mair or less wi' a doonricht detestable nuisance. The last words o' that sentence rather inadequately illustrates the extent o' my wrath—and mair's the pity. It staun's to reason that ilka ane canna be a lexicographer, like the rare auld departed speerit o' Fleet Street; but gin I were only capable o' haudin' the caunle to that worthy man, ye may be sure a mair expressive expletive wad be forthcomin.'

At ilka street corner picture-puzzles are thrust into your loof, and what's mair, obnoxious leein' bills, anent cheap boots, cheap claes, cheap tea, cheap crutches, and, wad ye believe it, that last necessity o' life, cheap coffins!

Aweel, wha was daunderin' doon the auld historical Canongate the ither nicht wi' an easy oot-o'-wark air, but my auld frien's, Tibbie and Tam MacCrowdie. Thae had just reached the Netherbow, and Tam stood lookin' roun' aboot him in a maist glaikit manner, wi' his haun's thrust deep into the capacious pouches o' his loosely fittin' breeks, when a chiel, wha Tam took to be a French

sodger on a veesit to the Castle, cannily slippit something into his haun'.

The curiosity o' woman is proverbial, but Tammas MacCrowdie, I may state withoot fear, as regards this sma' weakness, needna tak' a back seat, sae wi' a gracefu' gesture he held before the wonderin' een o' Tibbie a lang strip o' paper, wi' the followin' dune up in a' the glory and luxury o' twa colours :—

THE GRAND HISTORICAL
WAXWORK.

KINGS, QUEENS, PRINCES, DUKES, WARRIORS, STATESMEN,
POETS, CRIMINALS, ETC.

MUSEUM OF RELICS,

CURIOSITIES, PAINTINGS, SCULPTURE,
ANCIENT ARMOUR, ETC.

All should hear the Music by Machinery.

One of the principal sights of the City.

Open from 10 A.M. till 10 P.M.

Admission—Threepence.

"Gosh! we maun gang there, Tammas," said Tibbie, after she had read the intimation.

"What! tak' ye to the Waxwork? ay, ha! ha!! ha!!! and leave ye there. I declare, Tibbie, you're an awfu' woman, and as changeable as the weather. I aye thocht ye'd a mortal abhorrence for onything o' the kind," returned Tam.

"So I hae; but this maun be a grand affair, and as the show folks say, 'Ane o' the principal sichts o' the city.'"

"Weel, come awa', and let's see what's to be seen for the money," said Tam.

Tibbie needed nae second biddin', and in a short time thae were on their way to the Waxwork.

Few words passed atween them on the road, but as thae drew near the large buildin' she pouked Tam by the airm, and said in sic an innocent manner that he could scarcely keep frae lauchin', "I've heard that queens and princes gang to the Waxwork, Tammas."

"Ay, to see their relations," he returned; "sae dinna be surprised if ye should see a prince, a duke, or a poet there. Even thieves and intendin' murderers gang to see their brither criminals, sae I wad advise ye to look to yoursel'."

"Hae a care o' us! dae ye tell me sae?" she ejaculated, wi' a frichtened look.

"Ay, it's a rale fact;" but thae were noo at the door o' the establishment, and enterin', Tam laid doon a saxpence.

Tibbie had never been in sic a place afore, sae what wi' the grandeur, and the tunes frae the instrument worked by machinery, it fairly put her aff her metal.

"What a lot o' weel-dressed folk are here," she cried, as she adjusted her specs to hae a better look aboot her.

"Wheesht, woman! speak laigh," Tam whispered into her ear; for he jaloused she was takin' the feegures for veesitors, and Tam wasna far wrang in his conjecture. Hooever, to test if the deception was genuine, he seized her by the airm and said in a voice o' astonishment—"I declare there's auld Wullie Gladstone."

"What! the Grand Auld Man! Whaur?" she cried.

Quickly Tam directed her gaze to a corner o' the exhibition whaur the political veteran stood in the act o' shakin' haun's wi' the immortal Disraeli, and she was frae

his side afore he could guess what she was after, and gruppin' him by the extended haun', began shakin' it wi' a warmth that wad hae dune credit to ony Leeberal legislator.

"I'm rale glad to see ye lookin' sae weel, Maister Gladstone," she began, while Tam stood spellbound. "Rale glad to think ye hae leisure to honour sic a grand exhibition as this wi' your presence; but hoo's the mistress and the family, may I speer?" Nae signs o' a reply bein' forthcomin', Tibbie continued: "Atweel, I dinna wonner at ye no condescendin' to speak to an auld haverin' fool like me, for ye hae eneuch o' thae kind to deal wi' already, sae guid nicht, and God bless ye." Ance mair she gruppit the ootstretched haun' o' the feegure; but, losh preserve us! hoo Tam wished the floor had opened then and swallowed him, for Tibbie, wi' her enthusiastic shakin', drew Wullie's haun' clean frae the coat sleeve, syne wi' the fright let oot an unearthly screech that was heard, I believe, as far as the Tron Kirk, and fented in Tam's airms wi' the wax haun' still in her grasp!

"Water! water!! water!!!" puir Tam MacCrowdie roared to the wifie o' the exhibition, wha at that moment cam' upon the scene, wi' a face o' mixed curiosity as lang as Leith Walk!

"Never mind, Tammas, I'm a' richt," gasped Tibbie, openin' her een, and drappin' the great politician's artificial haun' on the floor!!! "Hae thae ta'en him awa'?"

"Whaur to?" quo' Tam.

"The Infirmary?"

At this innocent question Tam's exuberant spirits

got the better o' him, and no peyin' ony attention to what was at his back, he leant against the model o' Captain Webb, the hero o' Niagara, and the next meenit the pair were rowin' on the floor! Naturally eneuch, Tibbie wasna gaun to staun' by and see her guidman—as she thocht—ill-used by ony younger and mair buirdly a fallow than Tammas MacCrowdie, sae withoot hesitation she was doon on her knees reivin' awa' at the hair o' the Captain's heid like an enraged teegur, when the Waxwork wifie returned wi' the water.

Ye can weel imagine the sight o' the three o' them fechtin' in the middle o' the floor was as ludicrous a tableau as ever was staged.

There was poor Webb lyin' on his face, quietly submittin' to Tibbie extractin' haun'fu's o' hair frae his heid, while Tam, mortified ayont description, was tryin' to drag her frae the image.

Sic was the position the wifie fand them in when she entered, and withoot doot takin' her veesitors as escaped lunatics, she drapt the jug and ran for assistance.

Tam noo managed to get Tibbie eased aff a bit, and liftin' the feegur to its feet, explained to her enraged leddyship as weel's he could that the Captain was only wax!

"Wax! ye donnert fool, what way did ye no tell me sae at first? Just look at the mess I hae got mysel' into, and look at my guid Sunday goon torn in three places."

"Goon!" roared Tam wi' fury; "look what ye've dune to the puir Captain's nose, guidwife. Disfeegured the gallant hero's face for life. I doot there'll be a coort job aboot this, sae the suner we get oot the better."

"Cum' awa', then," cried Tibbie, no seemin' to realize the damage she'd dune.

Thae were just in the act o' leavin' the room when the Waxwork woman made her appearance, followed by the identical ferocious-lookin' Frenchified sodger chiel wha that nicht had stapt the bill into his loof.

"No sae fast, frien's," shouted the sodger in a majorly tone o' voice that gar'd Tibbie retreat a yard or twa. "What hae ye been after, eh?"

"Naething, guidman, only a sma' mistak' o' the wifie's."

"Sma' mistak'! dae ye ca' this a sma' mistak'?" and liftin' the haun o' Wullie and the nose o' Webb frae the floor, the Waxwork wifie thrust them in Tam's face.

"Ye'll pey the damage at ance, or we'll mak' a case o't," put in the sodger.

"Weel, if ye'll let me explain hoo it cam' aboot, I'll only be ower willin' to mak' guid the ill that's dune!" said MacCrowdie.

"It was a' my faut, and I'm ver——"

"Haud your tongue and no run folk into mair mischief," roared Tam. "Hae ye no dune eneuch o' damage already?"

In as brief a space o' time as possible Tam then explained that his guidwife had never been in sic a place afore, and naturally eneuch she had mista'en the wax feegure o' Gladstone for the illustrious personage himsel', and in her hearty enthusiasm had drawn his haun' awa'!

"And hoo did ye manage to bring aboot the fa' o' Webb?" queried the sodger, winking slyly to the woman at his side.

"Oh, like the fa' o' Kartoum; a sma' mistake and the want o' better support!" retorted Tam.

The answer seemed to hae the desired effect, for the woman laucht, syne better laucht, and the sodger cried "Awfu' guid!"

In an instant Tam saw he'd gained an easy victory, and no wishin' to show a retreatin' speerit, calmly said, "Hoo muckle am I in your debt, mistress?"

"We'll say naething aboot the damage the noo, only be mair attentive to the guidwife in future."

At thae words the expression on Tibbie's countenance wad hae melted ony heart o' airn; and after a thorough theatrical curtesy and an extremely sweet "Thank ye for your kindness," the sodger and the proprietress gaed to restore their feegurs and left Tibbie and Tam to themsel's.

"Heth, but that was a narrow escape," whispered Tibbie.

"Ay," replied Tam, "and ocht to be a warnin' to ye in future never to meddle wi' things ye ken naething aboot. Ye're sae far back in warldly affairs that I'm never oot o' het water. Tak' tent mair in future, or I'll hae to get some ither means o' enlichtnin' your perceptive faculties; deed ay!"

"A' richt, Tammas, but what's yon?" quo' she, wi' a carelessness that was aggravatin'!

"Ay, weel may ye speir what's yon, and I'll tak' the trouble to let ye ken. It's a woman in the *branks!*"

"The what?"

"No, the *what;* the *branks*, whilk used to be a punishment for your sex in the aulden time when thae gar'd their tongues wag ower freely. I'm thinkin' it wad be an act o' charity if ministers wad mak' a present o' ane o' thae usefu' things to ilka foolish chiel' when he gets married—it would save a lot o' strife in future years."

"Ye may think sae, Tammas; but I'm on the negative side in this case," was the cool reply.

"Look, Tibbie, there's Rabbie Burns and Hielan' Mary!"

"Dae ye tell me sae? Whaur?"

"Ower there; but mind and dinna touch the feegures!"

"As ye sae, Tammas, but hoo like. Ay, Rabbie, auld Scotland weel may daut ye."

After a guid look at Wattie Scott, Dauvit Livingstone, and a wheen mair notable men, thae cam' to the sedate feegure o' General Gordon, whase sair fate the nation lang mourned.

Tibbie was muckle affected, and it was only after lang reasonin' that Tam succeeded in gettin' her to desist frae pu'in' the Madhi aff his stand!

"Eh, the broon rascal that he is! My certie, gin I had him in my clutches for five meenits I wadna be laith at settlin' lang staunin' accounts!" she ejaculated.

"I can believe ye, Tibbie; sae the suner ye offer your services to the country the better."

Tam noo hurried his better-hauf alang to the magic mirrors and views, for he kent it wad be near haun' ten o'clock.

Tibbie, through her inqueesitiveness, had got her e'e on a wheen impudent-lookin' stuffed monkeys, and was nicherin' awa' when he drew her suddenly fornent the magic glesses, and the result was electrical!

"Ye see what your lauchin's dune for ye noo," cried Tam, as Tibbie aghast and speechless, viewed hersel' in the gless.

"I hae aften heard o' 'lauch and grow fat,' but, preserve us a', here's reality wi' a vengeance," she stammered.

"Serve ye richt," said Tam, scarcely able to suppress his lauchter. "Ye can let yoursel' oot as a fat woman at aince withoot ony fear o' failure——"

But at this point he put his fit intil't; for gettin' ower near the side o' the gless, the guidwife saw her lord and maister staunin' as stout as hersel', and gi'ed vent to her feelin's by nicherin' hearty and lang at the novel deception.

The views o' foreign kintries drew forth muckle admiration, and Tibbie wadna leave the place till Tam had promised to gang *twa days doon the water to Paris,* as she expressed it!

On the way hame "bonnie Paris" was a' she could speak aboot, and has been sae ever since.

Ignorance is bliss; hooever, Tam maun let her ken that instead *o' twa days* it'll maybe tak' *twa months!* This is sure to cause an awfu' shindy—the thocht o't, in fact, already mak's him shiver. Nae matter, it maun be dune!

Tibbie's Valentine.

DAGGERS and dynamite! puir Tam MacCrowdie has gotten himsel' into anither bonnie mess, and as usual, through nae less a personage than Tibbie. Things, weel-a-wat, are sairly changed since his youth, when the braw valentines, wi' their borders o' perforated paper and muckle-admired ribbons, used to be a' the rage; but, losh preserve us! the kind thae send noo-a-days are no fit for the sicht o' a hangman! Sic ramfeezled, conglomerated, fossilified caricatures o' man's ingenuity! "The back o' my haun' to ye, St. Valentine, ye've muckle to answer for!" ejaculate mony deeply-injured creatures, and Tam wi' the lave.

Hoosomever, ye maun ken aboot the twa-fit absurdity her leddyship gat on the 14th o' February, and whilk has kept Tam in het water ever since.

That Tibbie was after something no canny my auld cronie had guid cause to jalouse twa days afore; and, as a natural consequence, the idea entered his saft lump o' a heid that she was connivin' wi' a wheen young and glaikit fules, wha, wi' their on-gauns, as I remarked at the time, wad sune hae laid even me, a man o' cool temper, and wi'

far-seein' faculties, in the mools beside the banes o' my respected ancestors.

"O'd, guidman, when is Valentine's Day noo?" was the rather aggravatin' question that fell on Tam's ears, as he lay in bed on the mornin' precedin' the 14th.

"Heth! ye're puttin' yoursel' in an awfu' state aboot the 14th," replied Tam, lookin' at her wi' the corner o' his left e'e suspiciously.

"Dae ye think sae, Tammas?"

"Deed dae I."

"Then think awa', for what auld wife at this time o' the year canna help reca'in' to min' the mony braw valentines and presents their Joe's used to send them when they were bloomin' in their teens."

"Foolish fallows; foolish fallows!"

"Noo, that's whaur ye mak' a muckle mistake," warmly retorted Tibbie, wi' the least touch o' sarcasm, whilk didna mak' things ony better. "If ye were aye ower miserly to e'en waste a bawbee on what ye designated trash, that's no to say ithers were dauft eneuch to follow your example. Dod! ye'd be a fit companion to the wifie I hae read aboot, wha was sae miserly that when she catch't a flee in the sugar, she used to get the auld bellows and blaw what was stickin' to its feet back into the bowl. Na, na, your conscience tells ye better than my words that in respect o' generosity ye couldna haud the caunle to—— ye brawly ken wha!"

"Ca' your gir, Tibbie; ca' your gir; there's naethin' like historical facts, and a brush wi' the enemy," said Tam. 'It gies the story a colourin', but I doot this ane o' yours'll no staun' washin'!"

Mair frae her on this point Tam failed to get, and just as he was again doverin' ower into the airms o' Morpheus, the cod was suddenly drawn frae aneath his heid wi' sic a force that he thocht the auld tenement had at last collapsed.

Quickly Tam cam' to his senses and was then able to see withoot lookin' twice that Tibbie's temper had got the better o' her, and that she had gien the middle o' the floor the benefit o' the warm cod, as if it needed sic a comfortable commodity! Wisely at the time he said naething, but just snored the looder, and in a short time Tibbie was soun' asleep.

The hale o' that day she was as dour to draw as a rusty nail, but eventually near haun' nicht Tam managed to ease her a bit, after whilk thae southered the broken frien'ship.

The next mornin' was the memorable 14th, and Tam had just sat doon to a guid breakfast, in a better frame o' min' than he had dune for a week back, little ettlin' that a storm, whilk was destined to play muckle havoc wi' a' and sundry, was sae near at haun'. He was just in the act o' pourin' oot the tea, when the shout o' the postman in the stair gar'd Tam spring to his feet; but, feth! Tibbie had the advantage, and was oot ower the lintel first. Tam had scarcely got back into his seat, when in she cam' smilin' a' ower, and bearin' triumphantly aloft a broon paper parcel and an official-lookin' envelope.

"My certie, but ye'll dae noo," Tam remarked wi' emphasis, syne made a grab and got haud o' the letter.

Like an enraged teegur she drapt the parcel, and liftin' a cup fu' o' het tea, she slashed the hale o't aboot him, and

wi' a "Tak' that, ye jealous fallow," she was oot the door, wi' an alacrity that was really astonishin', considerin' hoo muckle she'd been yatterin' aboot "thae awfu' rheumatics" o' late!

As ye may weel suppose, my frien's temper was up to the highest degree, and it was maybe just as weel she ran, or instead o' "Tibbie's Valentine," it wad dootless hae been "Tammas MacCrowdie's crime."

Atweel, Tam dichted his sel' wi' the dishcloot as weel's he could, and giein' Baudrons a no canny heeve aff the chair, sat doon to hae a glint at what had caused sic strife.

Naturally the caligraphy on the ootside first met his bewildered een, and I can honestly and conscientiously say the readin' o't was nearly Tam's death!

Sic familiarity, audacity, and utter disregard to ony ane's sensitive feelin's! It's a wunner to me that the Post-Office authorities didna put a private detective on the sender's track, and quickly gar him don a straicht jacket in ane o' oor lunatic asylums, for he's no qualified to be at large,

The audacious wretch had even tried to come the "poetry" dodge. Here are the lines, as far as I can min', and judge for yersel's—

> "This, postie, tak' withoot delay
> To my fond love, there's nocht to pay!"

And on the ither side, in a fine clerky haun',—

> "My ain, my sweet, when next we meet
> Doon by the auld Whale Brae,
> I'll on your lips sae awfu' sweet
> Implant smacks—sixty-twae!!!"

Withoot doot thae noble lines show the "poet" at his best, and ye'll admit he's worthy o' the laureate's bays.

Tam, no' withoot some hesitation, noo broke the seal, in the full expectation o' seein' love's devotion in a' its realistic horrors—I mean grandeur—but walie! the sicht gar'd even puir Baudrons, wha'd been watchin' his manœuvres, jump nearly four feet wi' fricht and fuff! fuff!! fuff!!! And nae wonner. Sic a picture! Sic a vile and diabolical misrepresentation o' Tam's better hauf! Sic base insinuations! Ootside, love; inside poison. Oh hoo he hunger't for the *artist?* Oh, that the guidman o' Tibbie MacCrowdie had haen him in his power for five meenits only, that—— But words fail to express what he micht hae dune.

Tibbie was depicted in aboot thirteen colours as an auld washerwife up to the elbows amang soapy suds; while huggin' her affectionately roun' the neck was an antediluvian-lookin' birkie, addressin' her again in "poetry" thus—

> "Ne'er min', my love, your man at hame,
> Wha'd sell ye for a penny,
> But flee wi' me whene'er ye like
> To foreign shores, dear Jenny."

The picture o' Tibbie as a washerwife didna seem keepin' to facts, and ca'in' her Jenny was anither mistake. Hooever, Tam thocht it was maybe a poetical license, or that she'd telt the birkie her profession was washin', and her name Jenny, sae's to hide her identity a wee.

The attachment, hooever, Tam was determined to trace; but just as he raise to gang on an expedition o' flirtational discovery, in bauldly stapt Tibbie.

"Oh, ye deceivin', hypocritical, cantankerous hizzie that

ye are!" was Tam's first salutation. "Hoo daur ye look me in the face. Avaunt, 'woman, thy name is frailty,' and langer aneath this roof ye winna stey."

"And what for no, guidman?"

"What for no? Hae ye the audacity to spier sic a question, wi' the proof o' your guilt afore your vera een? Look at this and confess the on-gauns."

But second thochts are best; and afore Tibbie had time to clap her wat een on the Valentine, Tam had it in the fire.

"There, that's the best place for a' sic trash, and I only wish I could put the sender the same gate."

"I doot, Tammas, the little sense ye ance could boast o' has left ye a'thegither. I wad advise ye to see the doctor afore the symptoms spread."

"Ye insolent limmer!" cried Tam; but got nae further, for a lood knock at the door gar'd him spare his tongue. "Cum' in if your feet's clean," shouted Tibbie, in a tone o' voice that nearly shook the hoose, and in stapt their postman, closely followed by a young and strappin' hizzie.

"I doot there's been a sma' mistake wi' me this mornin', Mrs MacCrowdie," he awkwardly began. "I gied ye a parcel, and in my hurry, somehoo, managed to haun' ye a letter too, whilk was for Jenny here."

"For Jenny!" ejaculated Tam.

In an instant the truth dawned upon Tammas MacCrowdie that Tibbie was innocent. The valentine had come to the wrang hoose. Here was a dilemma. First he turned to the guidwife, wha sat speechless at the chimla, but wi' a look on her begrutten countenance that plainly telt there wad be eruptions in a wee.

"I'm really sorry that sic a mistake has happened, and mair sae as I canna gie up what ye're in search o'. I took the valentine as a doonricht insult on Tibbie there, and stapt it in the fire no' twa meenits syne."

"But did ye no' surmise it was at the wrang hoose?" asked the man o' letters.

"No; I never jaloused but what it was a' richt, although makin' Tibbie a washerwife and ca'in her Jenny seemed aff the mark. It's a' the guidwife's faut, hooever, for she's had some awfu' suspicious ways aboot her for twa three days back."

"Did ye ever hear the like?" cried Tibbie, in heart-breakin' sobs. "It's ill o' your part; it's ill o' your part. The way I was sae anxious to ken what day the 14th fell on was because an auld acquaintance promised to send me a new linen mutch, whilk I'm muckle in need o', and this is the upshot."

Seein' naethin' mair was to be the ootcome o' their veesit, Jenny and the postman left the hoose; but what followed after their departure was something awfu'. Dishes were broken through sheer spite, the pictures were pu'd aff the wa's; Tam was ca'd a jealous-minded scoundrel a hunner times ower, and ever since he's no haen the life o' a dowg. Coax her? The puir hen-pecked fallow has even gaen the length o' promisin' her a new simmer's bannet, but a' to nae purpose. Sae there's only ae remedy noo, and that's a separation, to whilk I gladly say, AMEN!

A Theatrical Scot.

DEED ay! there is nae use hoodwinkin' the fact that this nineteenth century has played monie a plisky wi' the rigid Calvinistic doctrines and formalitees o' oor forfaithers. Kists o' whustles, Amateur Theatricals, and Mock Trial by Jury, are noo looked upon as the essential elements o' prosperous congregations, and o' sic a stimulatin' and artistic relaxation that auld and young vie wi' ilk ither in—

"Haudin' to nature the mirror up."

Ye'll no wonder, then, if my auld frien' Tam MacCrowdie, a guid man, and wha, it behoves me to admit, is still a Free Kirk elder, has been to see the immortal warks o' Wullum Shakespeare, and noo—

"Frae early morn till dewy eve"

the ears o' his guidwife Tibbie are assailed wi' deep-toned, sonorous quotations frae oor new and enthusiastic votary o' the dramatic airt.

It is an undooted fact that there are aye obstacles o' huge magnitude to be owercome in a' great undertakin's, and in this particular instance veesions o' Tibbie's wrathfu' tongue and temper sairly disturbed the mental equilibrium o' Tam; hooever, he was saved the trouble o'

concocting a scheme for a nicht's domestic reprieve, owin' to her leddyship bein' summoned to a convention o' crazy anti-crinolinists, whilk had been suddenly convened owin' to a threatened importation o' a pneumatic dress improver, whilk Tibbie declared "Wad shake the very foundation o' woman's high estate." The meetin' was to be held in ane o' the rooms o' the Penny Savin's Bank, situated in a locality rich in historic and literary associations, and whaur o' a nicht bibliophiles, antiquarians, and ither kindred speerits maist abound.

Scot-free then was oor apostle o' Shakespeare; and Tibbie had nae suner left the hoose that nicht than Tam did likewise, sae in a short space o' time he sat spell-bound in the temple o' Thespis watchin' ane wham nane beheld but—

——"Like lesser lichts,
Did veil their croons to his supremacy."

Deed ay, that's a fact, and frae then till noo Tam's been a changed man, as Tibbie can honestly and conscientiously certify.

Maist ilka nicht her leddyship declares that she canna get a wink o' sleep wi' his mad ravin's and ongauns, but ignorance is bliss. Little does she ken that the "mad ravin's," as she ca's them, are the brilliant aphorisms o' Shakespeare, Goldsmith, or Goethe, the—

"Men o' choice and rarest parts."

Atweel, a week later, Tam had occasion to leave the solitude o' his humble abode; and his mind bein' deeply absorbed in the intricate problem o' petitionin' Parliament to provide playhoose passes to pennyless paupers, he happened to run against the son o' an auld and worthy cronie o' mine ca'd Benjie Blaidry, wha had lang aspired to be

an actor. After a general crack on the weather, craps, bankrupts, and bank failures, the conversation turned to literature and the dramatic airt; and when Benjie becam' cognizant o' his frien' bein' sic a true devotee o' the stage, his enthusiasm was unbounded.

"Man, Tammas," said he, as he grupped his haun' and shook it fervently, "you surprise me, but what could unprejudiced folk expect frae a man o' your intellectual calibre and literary attainments. Gosh! we maun start a dramatic club."

"The vera thing!" cried Tam, in deep sepulchral tones, as he faulded his airms and struck an Irvingite attitude on the pavement. "But when and whaur?" he interrogated.

"She'll no' do it here," interruptingly, and rather impatiently, asserted a policemen, wha had been listenin', and noo like an evil foe crossed their path. "She'll shist tak' hersel's aff ta flagstane's at wanse, whatever, moreover, or it'll maype pe waur for hersel's."

"Sirrah! your officious mandate we obey, so enough," returned Benjie, as thae moved off to further elaborate the plan for their first rehearsal.

After this sudden intrusion o' the nicht policemen, Tam and his frien' sojourned to fields and pastures new—

"Far frae the madding crood."

in order that thae micht proceed undisturbed wi' the play, and whaur it was agreed that on the followin' nicht thae should mak' a start, the piece selected being "Macbeth." Tam, of course, was to play the title *rôle*, while Benjie was to assume the character o' Macduff.

For a first nicht thae had resolved no' to adhere strictly to the text, but try a few extracts just to see if "the game

was worth the caunle," as Benjie, wha is unsurpassed at quotations, expressed it.

Of course it was understood that for the time bein' their new departure was to be keepit a strict secret, sae that thae micht burst on the world some day, and electrify baith frien's and foes. Even Tibbie wasna to be acquainted wi' the facts, for the length o' woman's tongue is proverbial.

It wasna withoot muckle domestic strategy and manœuverin' that Tam coaxed his better-hauf to gang and see hoo an auld neebor o' her's, wha leeves at the Castle o' Clouts, was keepin', just aboot the time he expected Benjie to arrive.

"Dod, it's rale guid o' ye condescending to fash yersel' aboot Kirsty," she sarcastically grunted, "Ye're surely no' gaun to leeve lang?"

"Nae fear o' that, Tibbie; I'll leeve mony a day yet, it's to be hoped."

"I differ wi' ye there entirely, guidman, for ye've changed sae muckle within the last sax days that I whyles scarcely believe it's you. Afore I could aye understaun' what ye were drivin' at, but noo sic blethers wad be nae credit to a madman, and as for that heid-hingin', and shufflin', shauchlin' gait, preserve us! ye'll sune no hae a boot on your fit."

To this domestic rhetorical effort oor apostle o' Shakespeare made nae reply, but as she gaed oot the door he cast at her ane o' the witherin' looks he had been practisin' since the previous nicht, but it failed to hae the desired effect.

To get the hoose in order for Benjie's comin' and the

tragedy's enactment was the wark o' a few meenits, and just as Tam had feenished, in strode his frien' wi' an auld carpet bag in the ae haun' and twa wudden swords in the ither.

"Enter Macduff!" shouted Benjie, and throwin' the "props," as he ca'd them, on the floor, he drew ane o' the wudden swords, planted his fit firmly on the bag, and grippin' his frien' by the throat, in a diabolical mefistofilian voice thunnert out—

> "Dishonourable boy!
> That lie shall lie sae heavy on my sword
> That it shall render vengence and revenge,
> Till thou the lie-giver and that lie dae lie
> In earth as quiet as thy father's skull!"

At this Tam's very bluid ran cauld, and quakin' wi' fear he cried as lood as it was possible under the circumstances, "Desist, ye murderin' villain, desist!"

"Man, Tammas, hoo dae ye like that?" said Benjie, as he sheathed his wudden sword—*i.e.*, rammed it through the bottom button-hole o' his waistcoat.

"Like it!" roared Tam, "there's ower muckle *reality* aboot it for me, and as for the insinuatin' language aboot my respected faither's skull, I'll no hae it."

"It was only the true frenzied passion o' the airt," reiterated Benjie; "sae let's to business and nae mair aboot it," sayin' whilk he opened the carpet-bag and dragged forth a lot o' auld claes.

"This is oor wardrope, Tammas."

"I'm rale gled ye've got a name for't," quo' he.

"Weel, on wi' that at ance and let's see hoo ye look," and he haunded Tam what had dootless dune guid service at the '45.

Tam saw that protestation was useless, so said naethin' but got the kilt, coat, and bannet on as best as he could, Benjie daeing likewise; and in spite o' the imperfections o' the fit, I maun confess, withoot jokin', that their feegures were noble and commandin'. Oh, hoo I then wished that Tibbie had been present to behold her lord and maister in a' the glory o' a chieftain's allurin' attire.

"Noo, what's first on the programme?" Tam ventured to ask Benjie, wha was stridin' up and doon the floor breathin' vengeance on the heid o' a' and sundrie.

"Hae ye got your sword?" he queried.

"I hae," said Tam, "and, what's mair, a haun' that can use it."

"Worthily spoken; and noo for the lines."

"Lines! is't the the claes rope?" he ejaculated.

"No; the play. Man, Tammas, hae ye no been studyin' up and committin' to memory since last nicht?"

"Heth! I clean forgot aboot that a'thegither," said Tam; "but I can ca' to mind twa three bits I learned afloof when a laddie at the schule. That'll dae if—," but afore he could feenish the sentence, Macduff, like an enraged teegour was upon him, and, in a voice that shook the vera pictures on the wa', shouted—"Base, deceivin' coward, prepare ye for the worst," and the next meenit thae were in grips and rowin' on the floor.

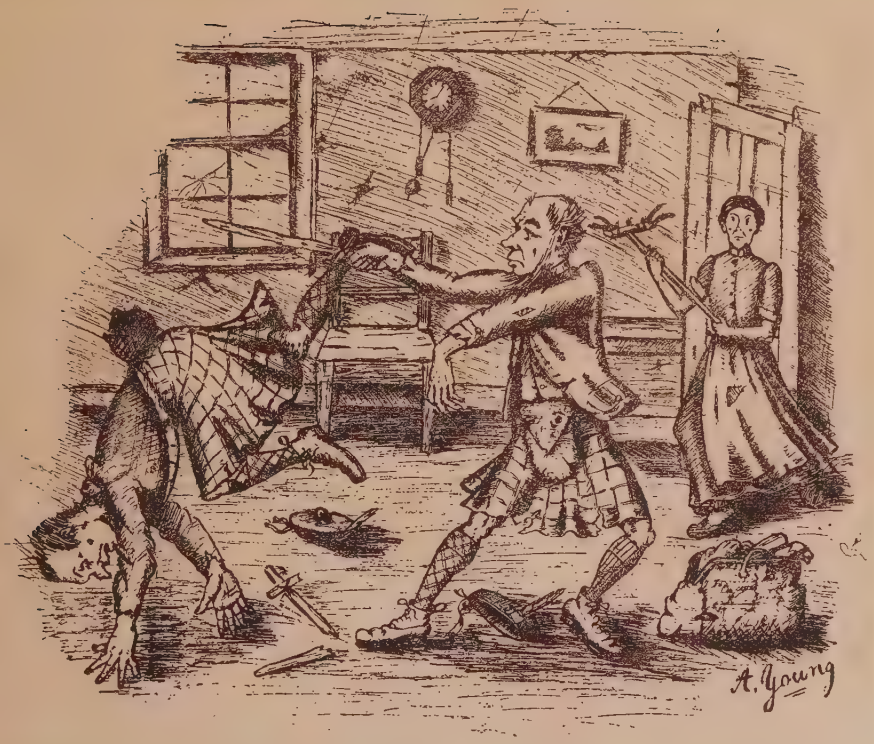
Ye speak o' the vivid scenes in Sims' melodramas, but theirs was a death struggle in reality. For twa three meenits it was impossible to tell wha wad come aff victorious. Hooever, fortune was in Tam's favour, and wi' ae superhuman effort, he got to his feet. Tam's temper was fairly roused, for bein' ca'd a *coward* was mair than he

could thole, sae he again rushed at his antagonist, shouting—"Lay on, Macduff, and d——d be he wha first cries 'Hold, enough!'" And just as the wudden sword was aboot to pierce Benjie's heart the door was burst open and in rushed Tibbie, wha, no kennin' nor comprehending the state o' things, seized the besom shank and belaboured baith o' them oot o' the hoose, syne doon the street, whaur thae were sune grupped by a policemen.

A lang explanation and a closer inspection by Tibbie got their release, but no' afore a crood had collected, amang them an oot-o'-wark, but enterprisin' photographer, wha, in spite o' Tam's waefu' entreaties, insisted on takin' Tibbie, Tam and Benjie, in their dramatic habiliments.

In a week or twa the group will be in a' the shop windows, amang politicians, actors, singers, etc., etc., for sale, sae *fame* has fa'n to his lot at last withoot muckle bauther.

The dream o' Tam's life has been realised, only, alack! to be crushed again by Mr Benjie Blaidry, junr., wha seems to be antagonistic to my frien's view o' what constitutes success. I'm tauld he has the audacious impertinence to gang aboot sayin' Tam'll never mak' an actor, because *he canna keep his temper!* Heth! sic is life, hooever, on this I'll no enlarge, but leave a' to judge for themsel's.



A THEATRICAL SCOT.

Tammas MacCrowdie's Elopement.

AND sae ye're gaun to spend a day at Glesca'." Thae words were addressed by Tam MacCrowdie to Andro Elshin, wha sat smokin' at his fireside on the hinmaist nicht o' last March.

"Ay, and the mistress wants you alang wi' us, Tammas."

"Whilk is no a bad idea ava'; but hoo am I to manage it withoot her leddyship kennin'? It's oot o' the question a'thegither," he returned.

"Easy eneuch, man; easy eneuch. I can post ye a funeral invitation the nicht."

"Ay, and what guid will that dae?"

"Muckle guid, Tammas. It'll be here the morn's mornin' afore ye gang to your wark, and ye can easily mak' Tibbie believe an auld cronie oot o' the toon has gane to his last rest, and for decency's sake ye'll hae to attend the funeral."

"Capital! in fact, the vera thing," joyfully exclaimed Tam. "Man, Andro, ye're guid at the makin' up o' thae things, and wad sune excel as a novelist."

"Ay, Tammas, it ran in the family for generations; but mum's the word, or everything'll be spoilt."

"Of course," retorted Tam; "but ye needna be feared, for Tibbie'll be the last to jalouse onything."

"I'm no sae sure aboot that, for women can find oot secrets nae ither mortal wad dream aboot; hooever, if ye say there's nae fear, it'll be a' richt."

This colloquy wad dootless hae been carried on much langer hadna the door opened, and the object o' their dread entered wi' a basketfu' o' groceries.

"It's a cauld nicht, Andro," said she, layin' doon the basket, and e'ein' that worthy, whase pipe was gaun like a steam-engine.

"Ay, a cauld nicht," he returned, "but I canna say I feel it here. Ye aye manage to hae a guid fire, Mistress MacCrowdie, cauld or no'."

"Deed ay, if folk's no kind to themsel' in their auld age, I doot nae ither body will be, sae ye see I'm showin' a guid example."

Here Tibbie began to empty the basket o' its contents on the table.

"Ay, just what I thocht; that dunner-heided grocer's forgot to gie me the sugar. There's aye ower muckle *polimitics* in his muckle red heid to mind his business."

"Weel, but ye ocht to hae look't at your things afore ye cam' oot o' the shop," Tam ventured to remark.

"Guidman, just haud your tongue; ye've naething to dae wi't, it's me and Scrimpweicht, as the folk ca' him, for't. Deil tak' him and his *polimitics*, and mair's the pity I sud say it, but when ane forgets business ye canna hinder folk frae speakin'."

"Is he a Whig or Tory?" said Andro, relichtin' his pipe.

"I dinna ken," said Tibbie, "but he's aye haranguin' wi' somebody when I'm in the shop. It's this policy, and the neist policy, syne the loss o' temper, then guid-bye to customers. By the way he speaks ye'd think he'd as mony policies in haun' as wad decently bury half the toon. Nae further gane than last week, he had an argument on wi' a guid peyin' Irish customer, but he found his match. I dinna richtly ken the story, but heard that he said something aboot the Sister Isle bein' fu' o' assassins and discontented lazy cuifs, and the neist meenit he found himsel' lyin' a' his length in a box o' eggs whilk stood at the end o' the counter."

At this Andro and Tam lauched heartily.

"It's naething to lauch at, guidman; naething to lauch at, I can assure ye. If ye'd only seen him after't, ye'd been vexed."

"Weel, hoo did he get oot o' the mess?" quo' Andro.

"Dod! the news spread like wildfire, and a wheen chiels got him hoisted shouther high, and carried to a horses' trough in the neist street, and gied him a guid dippin'."

"Whilk wad effectually cule a' political frenzy, I'm thinkin'."

"Ay, Andro, it clean'd him."

"Legislation wi' Scrimpweicht disna seem to be a peyin' spec," said Tam.

"Na, yet for a' that he's as bad as ever, but I maun see aboot the sugar," and Tibbie turned and left the hoose.

"Noo," said Tam to Andro, after he had jaloused her to be far eneuch oot o' hearin' reach, "what dae ye propose to dae?"

"Weel, in the first place, I'll post the funeral invitation the nicht, sae's ye'll get it the first thing the morn's mornin', said Elshin. "To you it will be unexpected; and seem unconcerned. Hooever, sae that ye'll hae to gang or ye'd never hear the end o't. At ten be doon at the Waverley Station, and my guidwife 'll be there waitin' to gang wi' ye."

"But when dae ye gang yoursel'?"

"I'll be aff wi' the first train at sax o'clock; the wife wad gang then, but she's some things to dae whilk canna be put aff, sae it'll be ten afore she'll be able to get."

"A' richt, Andro, I'll tak' her in charge."

"I'm deid sure Tibbie 'll never jalouse but what the death's genuine."

"It's risky; hooever, I'm no gaun to back oot o't noo."

"I wad think no'; and as for the truth, it never need be revealed."

"Ye're richt; but wheesht, here she's."

"Ye wadna believe it, but Scrimpweight had the audacity to assert that he gied me the sugar," gasped Tibbie on enterin', fairly oot o' breath. "I sune let him ken that or no', and gied him a bit o' my mind into the bargain."

"Atweel, I'm gled to hear't; but, o'd, is't that time already?"

"Ay, ten o'clock."

"Then I maun awa'. Guid nicht."

Next mornin' Tam was up earlier than usual, and had just sat doon to breakfast when the cry o' the postman in the stair made him start to his feet.

"Twa letters!" cried Tibbie, as she entered; "ane for you and ane for me—but wha's deid?"

"Guid kens; but we'll sune see," and openin' the black-bordered envelope, Tam MacCrowdie read wi' difficulty:—

"'SIR,—The favour o' your company to attend the funeral o' Cockie Crossbanes, my husband, frae oor hoose here to the place o' burial in Glesca' Kirkyard, on Wednesday, 1st April at 3 P.M.

Your obedient servant, AILSA CROSSBANES.'

"O'd, that's a sad and serious affair," Tam ventured to remark; "and sic short notice too."

"Atweel, ye canna gang, guidman," said Tibbie.

"But I'd never hear the end o't," muttered Tam, between twa three affected sobs.

"End o't, or no end o't, it's impossible—perfectly impossible."

"I'm no sae sure aboot that," said Tam calmly.

"But I am; besides the loss o' a day's wark ye'll need money, and whaur's that comin' frae, I'd like to ken?"

"Noo, I maun gang, and that's eneuch."

"Weel, please yersel', and bide there if ye like," roared Tibbie passionately.

"Quickly Tam supt his parritch, and in a short time after, arrayed in his auld black suit, was ready for the journey.

"When'll ye be back?" asked her leddyship snappishly.

"I canna say when I'll get a return train, but it'll likely be nichtfa'."

"And are ye gaun to be howkin' aboot graveyards till ye get a train? My certie! I'd as sune walk hame."

Wi' thae words ringin' in his ears Tam left the hoose, and only ower glad to get awa'.

Reachin' the fit o' the stair Tam aff wi' his boots and cannily crept up again, for he was determined to find oot the contents o' the ither letter. Puttin' his e'e to the keyhole he saw her leddyship tak' the envelope oot o' her pouch, and tear it open.

For twa meenits she stood reading it, then suddenly the letter fell frae her haun', and she drapt into a chair mutterin' something he couldna mak' oot.

Hastily drawin' on his boots Tam was doon the stair again, and turned his fitstaps in the direction o' the railway station.

As he hurried alang his brain was busy tryin' to divine what the contents o' the mysterious epistle wad be, but a' to nae purpose.

First he thocht ae thing, then anither, and finally gied it up as a bad job.

The bustle and confusion on the railway platform hauf an 'oor later eventually drave a' thochts o' the missive clean oot o' Tam MacCrowdie's heid, and he set aboot lookin' for the guidwife o' Andro Elshin, wha was to hae the tickets.

"It's a braw mornin' this, Tammas," said Andro's better-hauf, as she stapt up to whaur Tam stood.

"Ay, grand weather, Mattie. I suppose Andro gaed awa' wi' the sax o'clock train?"

"And'll be there by this, I'm thinkin'."

"Ou ay; but hurry—there's the train, and the guard's shuttin' the doors."

Arm-in-arm baith o' them got forrit to a carriage, then Tam majestically helped Mattie in, and was in the act o' bauldly stappin' in himsel' when crash cam' something

ower his cranium whilk completely dazed and dumfoundert my auld frien'; and the next meenit he was lyin' on the platform surrounded by a gapin' crood o' porters, news-laddies, and passengers! When Tam recovered sufficient sense to open his een, heth! he was glad to shut them again, for there was Tibbie, dirty and draigled, dancin' aboot like a wild Arab, and ca'in him for a' the deceivin' scoondrels her tongue could lay haud o'.

Andro's wife had never beheld Tibbie afore, and naturally takin' her to be some drucken woman wha'd made a mistake, she got oot o' the compartment, put the tile hat —noo wantin' a croon—on his heid, and wi' a "Come awa' and never mind her," was aboot to drag Tam to his feet, when doon cam' the auld family umbrella whilk Tibbie carried ower Mattie's back wi' sic a force that the ribs snapt, and gaed a' ower the platform!

"Never mind her, did ye say, ye brazen-faced hizzie. I'll mak' ye mind her," and wi' that her leddyship had poor Mattie by the hair o' the heid, and at her feet afore ony ane could interfere!

"Ye leein' scoondrel that ye are; get up and think shame o' yersel'. Ye wad rin awa' wi' anither woman, wad ye, as if I wasna guid eneuch. Ye didna think I was watchin' your high jinks for the last hauf 'oor; deed no, or ye'd oxtered less wi' ony slut!"

Thae words fully interpreted a', and noo Tam could discern the smiles o' the crood, and hear their nicherins, whilk cut him deeper than the umbrella.

Tam tried to explain, but a' to nae purpose, for Tibbie, trummlin' wi' passion, produced the identical letter she

had received that mornin', and openly read it to the crowd. It ran as follows:—

"MISTRESS MACCROWDIE,—As ane wha has your weelfare at heart, I wad advise ye to keep a strict e'e on your guidman. I hae heard frae guid authority that he intends to elope to foreign parts wi' some glaikit hizzie. They will leave the Waverley Station the morn's mornin' at ten o'clock, sae if ye value domestic happiness be there to frustrate the cauld-hearted pair.

ANE WHA KENS."

Tam saw it was noo oot o' the question to gang to Glesca' in sic a dilapidated state, sae got Mattie into the carriage again; and after tellin' her to explain a' to Andro when she arrived, the train slowly steamed oot o' the platform.

Tibbie still was as positive as ever that Tam meant to elope, but a wheen o' the news-laddies seemed to think different, for as thae stapt into a veekile—he couldna hae ventured through the streets in sic a sicht—thae began shoutin', "Hint-a-gowk! hint-a-gowk! hint-a-gowk, April!" On the road hame Tibbie never opened her mou', sae Tam had time and quietness to ponder ower the laddies' words, and afore their stairfit was reached he was fully convinced that some ane had made a gowk o' him and the guidwife.

Thae say twa heids are better than ane, sae Tibbie and Tam had a lang consultation, and afore bedtime had the mystery unravelled.

That Mysie Chalmers, their next-door neebor, was at the bottom o' the cruel joke, Tam didna doot; for a lang staunin' account she had against them, and is noo peyin' it back—wi' heavy interest, ye'll admit! And that the thievin' randy had been listenin' at the door to the crack

o' Andro Elshin the nicht afore was certain; and that she wrote the misleadin' letter, whilk Tibbie was foolish eneuch to believe, since then I hae found oot.

Deed ay, Tam was muckle to blame, for everything looked gey suspicious; but seein' he's been sair eneuch punished for't since, we'll draw the line—only let Mysie Chalmers prepare!

Tibbie's Veesit to Lunnon.

"LUNNON? Gaun to Lunnon? O'd, Tammas, ye've surely tint your senses a'thegither," exclaimed Tibbie the ither nicht. "Lunnon! my certie, I dinna believe ye'd survive the journey."

"I'm no sae sure aboot that; hooever, we'll see," was Tam's angry retort.

"*See!* I doot ye'll see nae *sea* there," returned her leddyship. "Na, na, naethin' but fogs and brick hooses; an' no' only that, but fegs, I've heard it said it's dangerous to gang oot when thae're on; in fact, if ye're a stranger to the toon ye're sure to meet wi' a *caterstraphe*."

"A what?" roared Tam, scarcely able to suppress the lauchter. "It's a catastrophe, ye mean! Woman, woman, your education's been sairly neglected."

"Ye're aff your eggs there, guidman, for Cockie Mitchell o' the Castle Wynd gied me as guid a schulein' as his abeelities wad allow; but time, no' to speak o' the responsibilities connected wi' married life drives mair than lear oot o' ane's heid."

"A fine excuse, Tibbie, but scarcely digestible."

"Atweel, as Scripture has it, 'Let him that has nae faut be the first to cast a stane.'"

"Scripture's a' vera weel in its place, but my discourse at present's Lunnon, and there I mean to gang," said Tam.

"And leave me here to thole a' the spitefu' insinuations o' Mysie Chalmers & Co.," said her leddyship, in a hauf-whingin' sort o' voice.

"There's no' muckle fear o' ony ane meddlin' wi' you when I'm awa'; ye're ower weel gifted wi' the gab for that; but to mak' things sure I'll gie the policeman on the beat the wink to keep his e'e on the locality."

"Ye dinna need to fash. If you gang to Lunnon sae will I, and there's an end tilt."

"Noo that's impossible, Tibbie, utterly impossible."

"And what for no?"

"Wha's to look after Baudrons, I'd like to ken, while we're awa', and what wad ye say when we cam' back if we found oor hoose broken into, burnt to the ground, or maybe lyin' in the middle o' the next street! There's naethin' impossible in thae anarchist times, when ilka ane carries as muckle dynamite in his pouch as wad scatter the hale o' his enemies a' ower the toon."

This, Tam was certain, wad effectually cure her o' the wish to veesit the Metropolis; but hoo far he was mista'en her reply sune convinced him.

"Guidman," said Tibbie hotly, "I dinna gie a preen's value for either Baudrons, the hoose, or dynamite. Dae ye think I'm to sit at the chimla cheek, while you're galavantin' aboot a strange toon daein' the lord chap wi' nae sma' air o' pride. Hech surse! I can see it a' noo,

ye're the kite, and I'm the tail, only ower heavy for your flicht, and dootless ye think it'll be best to dispense wi' me a'thegither. Dae as your conscience dictates; but if ye endeavour to gang aff withoot the tail to keep ye steady, wae's me for the consequence. I'm thinkin' ye'd come hame to Auld Reekie wi' a broken bow, in tatters, and wadna gang into the air again in a hurry."

"O'd, ye're gettin' quite metaphorical in your speech," said Tam sarcastically.

"And what for no? I've as muckle richt to be a poet as a wheen o' thae dunner-heided rhymers wha keep the poor newspaper editors in het water. Wae's me for the desecration o' the Sawbath day, and wae's me for the heids o' the editors on the arrival o' the first post on Monday mornin'."

"Amen! say I, Tibbie; but let's to business. If ye're really anxious to gang to Lunnon, sae let it be"—for he saw she was determined on't.

"Gaun to Lunnon," joyfully exclaimed Tibbie, "fegs, I'm up and at it. I wonner hoo Mysie Chalmers 'll look when she hears I'm gaun sic a lang jaunt. It'll be a moat in her e'e the hale time I'm awa'; but I hae nae doot she'll mak the warst o't."

After muckle difficulty Tam got Baudrons into a pock and on his back, and carried to the hoose o' Andro Elshin, wha was only ower glad to keep him for a day or twa, as he was awfu' bauthered wi' the mice.

When Tam got back Tibbie was busy preparing for the journey, and in less than an 'oor thae were baith on their way to the station.

Never as lang as Tam leeves will he forget the look o'

fear that crossed the countenance o' Tibbie MacCrowdie as she took her seat. The expression was a thorough—

"Fareweel, my native land, fareweel;"

and Tam could scarcely keep frae lauchin', for it was sae noticeable.

For some time thae sat in silence, to the seeming delicht o' a crowd o' impudent folk wha kept perambulatin' the platform; and wha had the audacity to glower every noo and then in at the window o' the carriage, wi' as muckle authority as wad hae dune credit to Jamie M'Levy.

Sic encroachment irritated Tam sae muckle that he was determined no' to staun' it ony langer, sae openin' the carriage door, he stapt oot on the platform to draw the stationmaister's attention to the fact, when a porter grupt haud o' him by the collar o' the coat, the next meenit he was lifted aff his feet and flung into the lap o' Tibbie, while the door was driven too wi' nae seemin' respect for the hinges. Afore Tam had time to recover himesl' to demand an apology the train was leavin' the platform.

"If I dinna hae damages aff them for this insult my name's no MacCrowdie. I'll let sic"—— The remainder o' the sentence maun remain in oblivion, for at this point he raise up, and was aboot to suit the action o' the words, when the train gied a rather sudden turn, and poor Tammas was flung wi' sic a force against Tibbie, wha was busy adjustin' her nicht-mutch, that she quickly jumpt to the conclusion that a collision had ta'en place, and wi' a screech that micht hae been heard at the far end o' the train, she was doon on her knees prayin' for deliverance.

The situation was novel, and helped muckle to allay the storm o' wrath Tam was aboot to lay to the charge o' the engine-driver and a' combined.

Things after this gaed smoothly, and Tibbie was sune soun' asleep, but no' afore she'd gien her lord and maister strict injunctions aboot keepin' his back to the engine.

Tibbie slept soundly till thae cam' to York, whaur the train stopt, sae's the passengers could get refreshment. Openin' her een Tam informed her o' the fact, and she was up in an instant and on her way to nae less than the first-class refreshment room.

When Tibbie and Tam entered the counter was surrounded by an excited crood, roarin' for this thing and the next; but the meenit they beheld her leddyship approach, they fell back like a wheen chicken-hearted Egyptians. An auld Scotch wife, wi' a white sleepin' mutch, in a first-class English refreshment room, was mair than the nerves o' the aristocracy that surrounded the barmaids could relish. And just as guid for Tibbie and Tam, or thae wadna hae been served ava.

"Twa cups o' tea, my lamb," said Tibbie, in a sweet tone o' voice.

"I can give you tea, but we've no lamb," returned a rather fancy-dressed woman behind the counter.

"Wha asked for lamb?"

"Will a roll do?"

"Na, feth! nae rows for me. I've eneuch o' rows at hame."

The passengers by this time had come to the conclusion that thae were human after a', for thae again began croodin' roun' the counter and shoutin' for things Tam never heard tell o' afore.

Tibbie, hooever, peyed sma' attention; and after thae'd feenished the tea she laid doon the cups alang wi' tippence as payment, and was turnin' to gang when the woman, pointin' to the twa pennies, said—

"I doot you've made a mistake."

"Dod, hae I gien ye ower muckle?" queried Tibbie.

"No; two cups of tea one shilling!"

"A shullin'!" ejaculated Tibbie, to the amusement o' the onlookers. "Just you tak' the tippence, and think yersel' weel peyed, my leddy," and wi' that she augustly left the room wi' the cries o' "Well done! bravo, Scotty!" ringin' in her ears.

That the guidwife wad mak' a name for hersel' afore she got back to Scotland, Tam was certain. At onyrate, ye'll admit she made a gey fair start.

Naethin' o' note took place till thae reached the great city o' Lunnon; but I can assure ye it was wi' an air o' pride that Tam, wi' Tibbie hingin' on his airm, emerged frae the station. Tibbie's first thocht was to look for the fog, but instead she saw on the richt what at first appeared to be Buckingham Palace; but thae sune found oot it was nae palace ava, but the Midland Hotel! The size o't nearly took Tibbie's breath awa', and as for Tam's it wasna far behind.

Tam had promised to veesit an auld cronie wha alang wi' his ither occupations could pen a guid Scots sang; sae he thocht it wad be best to see him at ance, and in five meenits after, to the evident jealousy o' her leddyship, the poet and my frien' were shakin' ilk ither's haun's like animated idiots!

After a guid breakfast in a room surrounded by the

immortal warks o' philosophers, poets, and novelists thae sallied forth, to the evident relief o' Tibbie, wha in plain language telt Tam she didna hauf like the idea o' takin' meat wi' an auld bluidy sword that had dune guid service at Bannockburn hingin' aboon her heid, and a stick that wad hae knocked doon a stot.

"Wheesht, woman; dinna speak o' Bannockburn," said Tam. "Mind ye're no' in Scotland noo. Writer chiel's haud dear a' that's antique, and what mair my poetical frien' Wullie than the lave?"

"True, Tammas, true; I dinna think o' that afore."

"Weel, ye ocht to; but here's a 'bus. We'll see St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey noo."

To describe Tibbie and Tam's feelin's after what thae beheld wad be impossible, Sic colossal magnitude everywhere! The Hooses o' Parliament—the War Office—the place whaur thae mak' the money—Buckingham Palace, &c. &c. &c. Then the squares—the brigs—the parks, wi' *rivers* in the centre whaur ye can hae boatin' at your will—the monuments—the mansions—the tunnels under the water—the playin' o' bands on Sundays—the playhooses—in fact, hunners o' ither sichts impossible to mention.

To hae a glint at the Lyceum o' "the Hamlet chiel," as Tibbie naively designates Henry Irving, oor great exponent o' tragedy, was what baith looked forrit to; sae it was arranged thae sud gang there at nicht.

The veesit to the Lyceum has been a sair, sair mishap to Tam MacCrowdie, for, although he's safe back in Auld Reekie, Tibbie's no'!

In coming oot o' the playhouse that nicht, somehoo or

ither, the guidman lost Tibbie in the crood, *and hasna heard tell o' her since,* and that's noo twa weeks syne! Search? Tam searched for the stupid auld body ower the hale o' Lunnon till he wore the vera bauchles aff his feet! He even gaed as far as Greenwich, thinkin' her inquisitive propensities had maybe led her there to see *the richt time!* or in case she'd been drawn there by the current o' electricity. The Black Heath was searched a' ower, poor distracted Tam expectin' to find her kneelin' on sic consecrated ground, for she aye spak' wi' enthusiasm o' the darin' valour o' Dick Turpin! but nae Tibbie was there.

Whaur Tibbie can hae wanner't to I haena the least idea—maybe lost in a fog, and when it disappears she'll find hersel' in France or some ither foreign part.

Temper and a', as she undootedly has, Tam MacCrowdie misses her sairly, and wi' ootstretched airms wad only be ower glad to welcome her back.

A substantial subscription has already been raised in the neebourhood to defray the expenses o' the followin' adverteezement, whilk has been sent to a' the newspapers in and aboot Lunnon:—

"LOST OR STRAYED!

"A Scotch wifie ca'd Tibbie MacCrowdie. Auburn hair. O' prepossessin' appearance! Saxty-four years auld. Staun's five feet four. When last seen she wore a white mutch, broon wincey goon, Rob Roy plyde, and apron (Kirkcaldy stripe.)

"Ony information will be thankfully received by her heartbroken and lovin' guidman, TAMMAS MACCROWDIE."

Bills hae been printed and sent ower a' the great city, sae there's hope yet.

The news o' Tam's sair loss has gaen through the toon like wildfire, and is still spreadin'.

Dizzens o' letters o' congratulation—I mean consolation —come wi' every post, and last nicht a deputation waited upon him to express their heartfelt sorrow and "buoy his droopin' speerits in the time o' affliction," as the spokesman put it.

There's ae thing certain, when Tibbie does come back, she'll get a reception she little dreams o' frae the auld wives wha leeve roun' aboot.

I hear it whispered that thae're busy makin' flags and twa triumphal arches to span the street! There's honour, but I doot she'll need it a', for their reception and Tam MacCrowdie's will be o' sic a different nature, deed ay!

Tibbie's Triumphant Return.

"O'D but this is heartbreakin'. Three weeks, and still nae word frae Tibbie. Hech ay, it's waefu' wark, and'll sune hae me in the mools, accordin' to the prophetic authority o' Andro Elshin and a wheen mair o' his compeers."

Thus Tam MacCrowdie soliloquised as he sat at the chimla-cheek the ither nicht, while Baudrons, wi' a look that wad hae melted sugar-candy, lay peacefully at his feet. Hoo lang in this sublime state o' imagination he wad hae remained it's hazardous to conjecture, hadna a lood rap brocht him to his senses, and as eager to catch ony information as a droonin' man is to catch at a straw, he loupt to his feet.

"Telegram—Tammas MacCrowdie;" the laddie at the door quickly ejaculated.

Tam mechanically took the letter, syne sank into the airmless airm-chair, and fully four meenits elapsed afore he had the courage to read it.

During that short space o' time, I canna hauf describe what passed through his mind. What if this telegram

wasna frae Tibbie, or maybe anither diabolical attempt to hoax him, or waur still, her death intimation.

The thocht o' his guidwife, Tibbie, wi' a' her fauts, deein' o' starvation in the great city o' Lunnon, while he was at hame wi' plenty and to spare, was mair than his nerves could langer staun', sae tearin' open the envelope he read :—

"Will be hame the nicht at 7.30. Stupid fule, to leave here sae sune. Could stay ither 6 months. TIBBIE MACCROWDIE."

"Sic audacity, to send insultin' words like thae through the post!" roared Tam. "Will be hame the nicht—will she, to the stupid fule. My feth! I'll let her ken whether I'm stupid or no', and maybe mak' her wish she'd stopt ither sax months. Oh! the inhumanity o' woman. After a' I've dune for her, to stop sae lang, and withoot e'en condescendin' to let me hae ae scrape o' the pen, but my time's comin'."

"Ye're richt, Tammas, your time's comin'."

The words gar'd Tam quickly lift his heid, and there at the door stood Andro Elshin, wi' a smile on his beaming countenance that was vera acceptable considerin' the circumstances.

"Ay, Tammas, the guidwife hasna used her lord and maister in a fit and becomin' manner, and she ocht to be chasteesed *withoot violence*."

"But hoo that's to be accomplished is at present to me a mystery."

"Dod, easy eneuch, man, easy eneuch. Let the neebor folks ken when she'll be here, and I'll vouch for their support and demonstrative reception."

"But Tibbie 'll tak' it in guid part."

"Ay, but strangers 'll no', sae that's whaur the lauch comes in."

"Guid again, Andro, guid again; and noo to spread the glad tidings!"

An 'oor later, the scene in their locality wad hae been worthy o' the attention o' a bankrupt photographic artist. Sic a concourse o' yammerin' auld wives, whase tongues actually drooned the soun' o' the brass band that was preparin' to proceed to the station. Mony and varied were the conjectures as to Tibbie MacCrowdie's lang stey. That she'd been left a fortune was ane o' the rumours, and that she'd eloped, and noo, penitent, was returnin', was anither; but the majority believed that she'd been lost for three weeks in a Lunnon fog, and had just found her way to the station! This I learnt frae a cronie, wha'd been oot amang them reconnoiterin', as he wasna kent.

Atweel, Andro and Tam were just in the act o' slippin' cannily doon the street, for thae didna want the auld wives to imagine thae were in the least concerned aboot their ongauns, when the band—saxteen in number—had the audacity to bauldly stap to the fit o' Tam's stair, and to his utter dismay and mortification, strike up "The girl I left behind me." Sic personality was unbearable, and if it hadna been for the strong airm o' Andro, wha held him back, neither the band, nor their battered brass instruments, *wad hae leeved to tell the tale!*

There in a dark corner Tam had to stand a martyr till thae thocht fit to desist sendin' forth their sarcastic notes, while the cheerin', and what he thocht soonded like cries o' "A speech—a speech," fell wi' nearly as sair an effect as sparrow-hail aboot his ears.

Andro Elshin, wha had his airms tichtly bound roun' Tam's waist, and his muckle heid hauf oot the stair window, seemed to be enjoyin' a' this, for he was nicherin' awa', whilk irritated his auld cronie sae muckle that wi' ae superhuman effort he broke frae his grasp, and was aboot to rush doon the stair when the randy voice o' Mysie Chalmers arrested his attention.

"What's she got to grumle aboot noo?" quo' Tam to Andro, and afore he had time to get a reply, there cam' the words as plain as if thae'd been roared in his ear—

"Sic a farce I never kent the like o'. Giein' auld MacCrowdie military honours. Hae a care o' us, but what's the warl' turnin' to. If the cause was just and the auld fule respected, I'd think naething o't, but a woman that deserted her man in a strange toon, to be received with as muckle enthusiasm as a hero o' a hunner fechts, it's perfectly ridiculous! Catch me mak' a flag, or e'en gang hauf-ways to the station; na, na, I've ower muckle sense for that."

Further remarks frae Mysie were inaudible, owing to the band striking up, wi' muckle force—

"Will ye no' come back again?"

syne wi' hunners followin' thae proodly marched doon the street.

Mysie Chalmers kept her word, for as Tam and Andro emerged frae the stairfit, she brushed past them wi' a venomed look that boded nae guid.

Of course it was natural that Tam should be at the station; sae doon he hurried and there beheld the band drawn up at the end o' the platform, while stravaigin' up and doon wi' as muckle authority as if thae'd been

general-superintendents, were crowds o' auld wives, airm in airm, wi' clean white mutches on their heids, and sma' tartan shawls ower their shouthers, the admiration o' a'.

A number o' auld gentlemen, in wonder, condescended to stop and inquire if onything was seriously wrang, and Tam, noo greatly agitated, replied—

"Naething wrang, frien's. Like a wheen mair, thae're just waitin' to satisfy their curiosity."

The haun's o' the station clock indicated that the oor o' arrival had come, and as if by electricity, the auld wives crowded thegither, and cheer after cheer rent the air, whilk for a meenit staggered a'.

"I think thae've gaen gyte," Tam ventured to remark to Andro Elshin, wha had accompanied him doon.

"Ay," said Andro, "and it seems to me that thae've never been inside o' a station afore; but look——" and pointin' as he spoke, to their amazement aboot a dizzen railway porters, wi' besom shanks and auld sleepers in their haun's, were rushin' to the far aff end o' the place whaur Tibbie's admirers were staunin'.

That the porters fully intended clearin' the platform Tam could see at a glance, but it wasna gaun to be sae easily accomplished as thae thocht, for, in spite o' the flourishin' o' besom shanks and the authoritative cries o' "Clear the platform!" the auld wives stood immovable, and weel Tam kent naething but a steam-engine wad shift them ance they took it in their heid.

It was just as the porters were preparin' to adopt physical force when the cry got up, "Here she's! here she's noo!" while the band at the ither end o' the platform quickly struck up—

"See the conquering hero comes."

Excitement was intense, and, as the train slowly steamed up to the platform, the porters drapped the besom shanks, and wi' a wild swoop were amang the enthusiastic auld wives, endeavourin' wi' sma' success to keep them frae the edge o' the platform.

The Queen couldna hae got a grander reception, for the meenit thae recognised Tibbie at the window, the cheers were deafenin', and Tam, wha was approachin' the carriage door wi' the intention o' helpin' her leddyship oot, was knocked doon on the platform, and dootless wad hae been trampled to death but for the help o' Andro Elshin. When he got to his feet there was Tibbie sittin' in an open veekile and smilin' to perfection, and the next meenit, mair deid than alive, Tam himsel' was hoisted ower the heids o' the crowd and drapt in beside her—an act o' kindness whilk, judgin' frae the expression on Tibbie's countenance, she didna seem to relish.

The horse, poor bruit, had been roughly taen frae the trams, and a wheen buirdly chiels—Elshin at their heid —were waitin for the word to start. The band was brocht to the front o' the veekile, and the auld wives got into order behint wi' an alacrity that wad hae dune credit to oor sodgers, syne aff gaed the procession to the merry strain o'—

"We'll gang nae mair to yon toon."

Alang the hail route the cheerin' and hanky-wavin' nearly drave poor henpecked Tam MacCrowdie oot o' his senses, although he endeavoured to keep his face as muckle oot o' sicht as possible.

As for Tibbie, she never seemed in better speerits, and

occasionally Tam could hear her mutter, "It's a grand thing fame."

Fain wad Tam hae turned roun' and reiterated, "Vain, vain woman!" but wisely held his tongue.

Thae had noo reached the end o' their destination, and when Tam ventured to lift his heid, the sicht that met his gaze fairly dumfounner't him.

There in front was the lang spoken aboot triumphal arch, wi' the words, "Welcome back again," in big letters in the centre, then a wee fauther alang the street were flags stretched across frae the ae window to the ither.

Slowly the veekile was drawn alang sae's the pair wad get a guid view, Tam supposed, o' the magnitude o' the decorations.

The stairfit was reached at last, and wi' a sigh o' relief that's indescribable Tam quickly stapt oot, followed by the august Tibbie, wha nae suner put her fit on the pavement than she was presented wi' twa bonnie bouquets and a poem o' welcome by oor toon bard, Davie Doggrel; unfortunately the crood was great and the pressure telt sae sair on her leddyship that she drapt the noble effusion, no' to speak o' the floo'rs, and thae haena been recovered since.

After muckle difficulty, Andro Elshin cleared the way, and managed to get them up the stair and into the hoose.

"Heth, but I'm tired," heaved Tibbie, as unconcerned as if she had been just a day awa'. "It's rale kind o' the neebors to receive me sae, and it'll mak' me think mair o' mysel' in future."

"To Freuchie wi' the future, I want to hear o' the

past," cried Tam, in passion. "Whaur hae ye been, eh? whaur hae ye been?"

"Whaur hae I been? Sic a daft-like question to speer! In Lunnon, Tammas, to be sure."

The reception—sae different frae what he expected—whilk the neebors had gien her, and noo her sarcastic tone, was mair than human nature could thole, sae, gruppin' her mutch strings, Tam gied them a pu' and roared, "Nae nonsense noo, whaur hae ye been?"

"Whaur you hadna the sense to tak' me; hadna the ——" here the report o' a tippenny cannon gar'd Tibbie stop short, then wi' a smile exclaim, "There's proof o' hoo I'm held in ithers' estimation. That's honour for ye; and mair than ye'll ever be able to lay claim to. Listen to the squeebs! and wheesht, there's the band playin' 'Auld Langsyne.' I wonner what thae'd think if thae kent ye were busy tryin' to get up a wordy warfare wi' the ane they've haen sae muckle wark wi'; sae bridle your tongue, guidman', and ye'll get far better on, tak' my word for't," and wi' thae partin' words o' advice frae the heroine o' the nicht she gaed awa' to bed.

To be kept ither aicht or nine 'oors in suspense was provokin'; hooever, Tam could mak' naething' o't, for Tibbie was sune fast asleep and snorin' loodly.

Next mornin' kind-hearted Tam was up and had the tea masked afore she awoke, and in return for his kindness she telt that on missin' him at the Lyceum door she turned doon the next street in the hope o' makin' her road hame, but instead fell in wi' an auld neebor, wha wad insist on her gaun and stayin' wi' her, till Tam turned up. After three weeks' waitin' Tibbie said she

was sure the guidman wad be hame, sae she sent the telegram he got the nicht afore. O' the adverteezement she kent naething, and when he enlichtened her she was like an enraged teegur, and in her heartbreakin' sobs cried, "The money micht hae got me a new wincey goon and a simmer's bannet."

Wae's me, Tibbie's an awfu' woman, and like the sphinx, a mystery!

The Gowff Craze.

WEEL, that beats a'! Tammas MacCrowdie a gowffer! Think on't, ye anti-athleticeesed automatons, and to the links at ance!

Picture my auld cronie in a' his *native* habiliment—big Tam o' Shanter, sleeved waistcoat, sairly worn oot breeks and towsy heid, wi' a set o' gowffin' sticks (hame-made, unpatented!) ower his shouther, and stravaigin' aboot the Braids in a glaikit manner howkin' for the lost ba's!

It's no' to be expected that Tibbie, for ae meenit wad hae jaloused that Tam in his auld age wad hae gane gyte ower gowff.

Since the day on whilk thae were buckled thegither, my auld cronie has dune mony a dauft trick, but this surpasses them a'.

Hooever, thae say "spooks" and crazes are contagious, and the mair I think o't it's consistent wi' reason, and no' to be wonnert at that Tam keeps pace with the times, and has ettled to become a member o' the Stimie Club.

The energetic Secretary o' that august body, therefore, had nae ither alternative but to mak' a personal ca' the

ither nicht and endeavour to initiate him into the intricate rules and mysteries o' the great game.

Unfortunately for Tam his better hauf was sittin' dozin' at the chimla-lug when his brither gowffer knockit.

In an instant Tibbie was awake, and openin' the door, beheld staunin' in the dark passage, a lang buirdly chiel, wha immediately boo'd, and speired for Tammas MacCrowdie.

Tibbie saw in an instant the guid breedin', and wi' as gracefu' and sympathetic a manner as she could command, ushered her veesitor into the best room in the hoose.

It behoves me to confess that Tibbie at a glance can tak' a mental photograph that micht put to shame ithers wha wi' their administrative capabilities, and power o' judgin' first appearances, warrants them to carry an unco hie heid.

Tam had nae suner saluted his brither o' the turf, and sneck't the door than Tibbie muttered, " I'll be far cheated if that chiel's no' a gentleman. His manly bearin' indicates it, no' to speak o' the hame-spun claes on his back, and the big tackity boots, weel adapted for gaun ower a ploughed field ! I'll warrant he's a farmer body, and maybe ane o' the guidman's grand relations ; hooever, there's nae harm in puttin' an ear to the key-hole *o' your ain door !* "

In an instant Tibbie was doon on her knees, and for a meenit or twa seemed to be strainin' ilka nerve to hear what the conversation was aboot on the ither side. Her face was a physiognomical study, worthy the airt o' a Cruikshank, or a Leech.

"Ay," she gasped, "just as I thocht, an angel's veesit,—a frien' at last! But what's that? A bunker!—a coal bunker? An easy matter that! I'll gie Tam a haun' wi't mysel' altho' I've to trauchle sax miles for't; and only ower glad, whether the wecht's heavy or no'; a stoot heart to a stey brae! What's that?" she again breathlessly exclaimed, "Tea? Caddie? A tea-caddie? Losh preserves! I dae like an afternoon cup, sae a pound or twa can ne'er come amiss; and as for a caddie, I hae my great-grannie's, as it has been haunded doon for generations, and wad only be ower glad to put it carefu' by gin a new ane was forthcomin'!" A sudden movement was noo made in the room, and Tibbie had to vacate her reconnoiterin' position.

Tam noo passed thro' the kitchen alang wi' the "buirdly chiel;" and seein' him to the stairfit, said "Guid nicht."

When he returned to the hoose, Tibbie joyfully met her lord and maister at the door, and takin' him roun' the neck hugged him affectionately!

"Heth! this puts me in mind o' the auld coortin' days," said Tam, fairly dumfoondered.

"And what for no'?" returned Tibbie. "This will ever remain a red-letter nicht in my existence. Thae say ye ken a man by the company he keeps; and Tammas MacCrowdie, I feel as if I'd been left a fortune! What a difference is in this chiel frae yon auld stupid body Andro Elshin ye forgather wi' far ower often to my likin', and the comfort and domesticity o' your ain hame; and as for glaikit Benjie Blaidry, wha hasna a moothfu' o' sense, altho' aye boastin' aboot his grand quotations;

losh ! the change wad fire anew the flame o' love in ony hardened woman's heart ! Tam, I'm prood o' ye, auld and a' as ye are !"

" O'd Tibbie, this moment seems to be the happiest ane in my life ; and when the day comes that I've to uphaud the honoured name o' Tammas MacCrowdie as a gowffer, your words o' solace and sweet sympathy will waft my thochts to the city and the wife o' my bosom ! "

Alack ! this rhetorical and metaphorical effort o' poor Tam's was sune nipt in the bud, for when the word " gowff " was uttered, she relaxed her hand o' the guidman's neck, took twa steps back, and stood aghast.

" Gowff, guidman ? Did ye say gowff ? that seductive, never-devalvin', and woman's heart-breakin' game ! What's that got to dae wi' my coal-bunker, or the tea, and tea-caddie ? Speak, gin ye hae the manliness to dae sae ! Gowff, that's bringin' ruin to the race, that's destroyin' ilka lassie's chance o' gettin' a man ! There's nae time for coortin' when gowff's on the board ! "

To this Tam made nae reply, but Tibbie kept yatterin' awa' at a sic fearfu' rate that he was at last compelled to tak' up a defensive attitude.

" I'm sure there's nae harm in the game," he ventured to say tremblingly. " By a' doctors it's agreed that it invigorates the mind, and mak's ye leeve langer."

" Leeve or no' leeve, I'll no' hae't. The peace o' oor happy hame's no' gaun to be disturbed wi' this new-fangled fad ! " reiterated her leddyship.

" As for the cost," Tam ventured to assert, " it's naethin' in comparison wi' ither games. I only need a putter, cleek and brassy, and can mak' the sticks mysel'."

"Putter, cleek and brassy! ye auld donnert fule,' screiched Tibbie; "it's *crutches* ye need! and as for makin' sticks, I doot ye'll hae plenty wark to dae *breakin'* them at hame to keep the fire gaun!"

This was clinchin' argument o' its kind, and eneuch to cool the ardour o' ony gowffin' enthusiast. Poor henpecked Tammas MacCrowdie stood speechless!

"And wha's your grand relative that's been ca'in'?" continued Tibbie, sarcastically.

"Nae relation, ava, woman; yon's the match Secretary o' the Stimie Gowffin' Club, and a truly enthusiastic devotee o' the game," Tam ventured to affirm.

"I doot he'll find I'm your match in this game," was the retort.

"But think o' the trophies and siller plate that's to be won nowadays," said Tam, coaxingly.

"Siller plate here, or siller plate there, I'll hae nane o't, and it's no' to be," said her leddyship wi' a haughty toss o' the heid that didna become her ava, syne wi' a majestic air she banged oot o' the kitchen.

"Gosh! but she's a tartar!" sighed Tammas, when she was oot o' sicht. "Thae speak aboot the emancipation o' woman, and ca' them the weaker sex, but by my feth! it's a' platform havers! Morally and physically I hae sma' chance wi' her leddyship, for when in a passion she'd ding doon a tenement!"

The hail o' that nicht Tammas MacCrowdie was a sad and sorrowfu' man. The hie hopes and aspirations he had cherished for weeks were blasted in twa three meenits, sae it was wi' an achin' heart that he sank into the

THE GOWFF CRAZE.

auld airmless airm-chair by the chimla, and fell soun' asleep.

Into the Utopian realms o' dreamland Tam wandered, and lo! he stood a full-fledged gowffer on the Braids, playin' his first match. Tam had warsled alang a' richt till he cam' to the "Rockies," syne he stood gazin' aboot him bambazed, no' kennin' whaur to play next. When tauld by the caddie, he exclaimed, "Mercy on us! ye dinna mean to gang ower that mountain!" Wi' muckle effort, hooever, he made a tremendous drive, and alack! the ba' landed in the valley. When he got doon a squeeky voice was cryin' "Use yer mashie!" but wi' a sair heid Tam had to gie it up for want o' breath. The "Himalayas" he thocht naethin' o', tho' the win' was blawin' straucht doon in his face, and afore he got to the tap he had to crawl on his haun's and knees. Wi' a' up, and a hole to gang, Tam led aff, syne wi' a carefu' drive reached it in twa. The crood noo gathered roun', excitment ran hie in the expectation o' seein' a grand feenish, when horror! wha should appear upon the scene but Tibbie, and swingin' the auld brassy she was carryin' ower her shouther in the air, wi' a heavy thud it cam' doon on poor Tam's croon, and felled him to the ground like a stot.

Wi' something akin to the sensation o' an earthquake, Tammas MacCrowdie, awoke frae his dream, and wad ye believe it, there was Tibbie staunin' at the kitchen door, and nearly into fits wi' lauchter cryin',—"Wha ere heard tell o' a hysterical gowffer! It's chiels wi' steady nerves and calm temperament that's wanted for that game!"

May Dew.

HA, ha, ha! wha'd hae thocht it? Imagine Tibbie and Tam MacCrowdie on the first o' May, up at four in the mornin' and on their way to the hill for May dew! Ha, ha, ha! ho, ho, ho! it's really lauchable, and puts to shame the sae ca'd early risers, wha if they manage to get oot o' their beds afore aicht think it a phenomena worthy o' bein' recorded in their daily diaries!

It was ae nicht in the hinmaist week o' April, and Tibbie and Tam were sittin' gey dowie beside the chimla-lug, when wha should stap in but Hughie, the auldest son o' Andro Elshin, and his sweetheart Jenny.

Tibbie seemed to be uncommonly weel pleased wi' the birkie's choice, for she quickly dichted the best seat in the hoose, and gar'd Jenny mak' hersel' at hame.

On things in general Hughie and Tam cracked for a while—no' forgettin' the approachin' waddin'—syne thae drifted into a state o' morbid silence—a state whilk Tibbie believes to be detrimental to her health—until Jenny, in a hauf jocular way, said—

"And ye'll be gaun up to the hill for May dew this year, Mrs MacCrowdie?"

"O'd, lassie, that was as far frae my thocht as the hill itsel', and that's a guid bit."

"May dew!" quo she'; "gosh, we'd be a bonnie spectacle on the tap o' Arthur's Seat. Twa auld dottered fules like us wad be a fine catch for thae shorthaun' chiels to exerceese their clever literary abilities upon for the next mornin's paper. Na, na, Jenny, nae May dew for us."

It's awfu' to think Tam has sae little matrimonial ingenuity, considerin' the lang time he's been buckled to Tibbie, or he'd thocht twice afore he opened his mou', kennin' sae weel that her leddyship maun hae everything the reverse.

If Tam had said, "We'll gang," it wad hae been a' richt, for she wadna hae moved a fit; but he'd made a false stap, and wad just hae to abide by the consequences.

Hughie—unconsciously, nae doot—wasna backward at heapin' mair fuel on the fire that had already began to bleeze.

"I dinna see what's to hinder ye gaun alang wi' Tammas," said he, addressin' Tibbie, wha had mislaid her specs, and was busy endeavourin' to recollect whaur she'd find them.

"Deed no, Hughie, I dinna see what's to hinder the guidman takin' me up to the hill this year. I was never up on a May mornin', and frae what I've heard it's a grand sicht; and no' only that but look at the guid ye derive frae the new fa'n dew! I've heard it said that it revives the countenance and invigorates the health; o'd, there's nae sayin' but when Tammas dees it micht be the means o' me gettin' anither man, auld and a' as I am."

"There's nae doot aboot it, guidwife," said Tam, "and I wad strongly advise ye to henceforth keep up the auld and honoured custom, and wooers ye'll hae plenty." This he returned in—as he thocht—as unconcerned a manner as possible, but the tone had a different significance to Tibbie, and she didna fail to catch him quickly.

"Atweel, Tammas, I think I'll adopt your suggestion; sae we'll get up early on the first o' May and aff to the hill. I suppose you and Jenny'll be gaun?" said she, addressin' Hughie.

"Ay; if I can wauken in time," he slyly answered.

"To that I say ditto," Tam ventured to articulate.

"Then I'll tak' guid care that ye dae wauken in time, guidman—ay, wauken in vera guid time," answered Tibbie.

To a young and soople birkie like Hughie and his sweetheart Jenny, the climbin' o' aicht hunner and twenty-twa feet micht be an easy task, but Tibbie to undertak' it—the vera thocht o't staggered Tam; in fact, he was positively certain thae'd never reach the tap. If thae did manage the herculean task, it wad only be to get there when a' the folks wad be comin' awa'!

The subject that nicht wasna carried on muckle langer, only afore leavin' their young frien' promised to see them on the hill that mornin' if spared and in health.

It wad be oot o' place, I'm thinkin', to reproduce a' that passed atween her leddyship and Tam on the nicht followin' Hughie's veesit. As usual, *May dew* was a' she could speak aboot, and Tam had it as a dessert after dinner and supper.

That Tibbie expected she'd be crooned Queen o' May, her guidman was beginning to think she inwardly believed, for her preparations in the shape o' feathers, bannets, goons, face-powders, hair-dye, &c. &c. &c., were something gigantic. She even gaed the length o' buyin' a sax shillin' volume o' the late poet-laureate's warks in the hope o' gettin' hints oot o' "The May Queen!" That Tam wad sune need to resort to some means o' curbin' her extravagant propensities, he had fully made up his mind, and thanks to Andro Elshin's conceptive faculties, the followin' adverteezement was ready for the public prints if she ettled to gang ony furthur:—

"NOTICE TAE A' AND SUNDRIE.—I winna be responsible for ony faldarals bocht and no' peyed for by Tibbie MacCrowdie frae this day henceforth.—Her heart-broken guidman,

"TAMMMAS MACCROWDIE."

That wad hae been an exposure she hadna reckoned for; hooever, it wasna needed, as she seemed to hae got as muckle as wad dae her turn by the time he had the warnin' ready.

On the last nicht o' April, Tam was determined to try something that wad enable him to sleep in the next mornin', and like a true frien' as usual Andro Elshin had his suggestion ready, whilk was to tak' an extra guid sleepin' draucht afore lyin' doon. Andro's plan was vera acceptable, but Tam didna hauf like the words *extra guid.* The thocht o' never waukenin' again entered his heid, and as mony had put themsel's into the same net afore him, it wasna unnatural to surmise sic. This didna put my auld frien' by the idea o' a *medium* draucht, and to Auld Drugs, the doctor, he wended his way, but when

he reached the door his heart failed, sae he turned and gaed awa' hame.

That Tibbie jaloused he was after something o' the kind, or whether it was his ain guilty conscience, I dinna ken, but she seemed to watch everything he took that nicht wi' a suspicious look.

The vera nicht that Tam wanted Morpheus to tak' a sairly persecuted chiel under his especial care he seemed determined to jilt him, and the coortin' was unremittingly continued weel on into the mornin' ere he condescended to tak' Tam in his airms. In fact, he nae suner seemed to hae dune sae than the elbow o' Tibbie began nudgin' him in the side, and her husky voice speered if it was near four o'clock.

Even the auld wag-at-the-wa' seemed to be against Tam that mornin', for as he was aboot to reply "It's no' twa o'clock yet," there cam' the familiar short bizzin' soun' precedin' the chappin', syne—ting, ting, ting, ting, quickly followed, and it didna need ony een openin' or collectin' o' senses to convince her that four o'clock had just chappit.

Tibbie was ower the bed within the next meenit, and though Tam was ever sae able to sleep noo, it was impossible owin' to the noise the poker was makin' atween the ribs, syne the break, break, breakin' o' coals, no' to speak o' "Get up, Tammas, it's past the 'oor," like a whirlwin' grazin' his left ear.

Hopes o' comin' aff victorious wi' sic a valiant heroine as Tibbie on the move was oot o' the question, sae, to use an auld fogey's expression, he had to surrender, in order

to avert what wad hae been to his future peace and comfort—an irreparable shock.

Tam was quickly on his feet and ready by the time Tibbie had the tea on the table for takin'. The mornin' was a' that could be desired, and steppin' oot the hoose and doon the stair as gently as possible, the pair were sune hurryin' alang the deserted streets on their way to the hill.

When thae got to the fit o' Arthur's Seat, Tibbie, wha'd been hingin' on his airm, breathlessly gasped, "We'll tak' a rest noo."

"Na, na, na, nae rest the noo. Wait till ye reach the tap," said Tam, determined if possible to staw her o' the veesit; and gruppin' her by the haun' thae began to ascend.

"Hae a care o's, Tammas; dinna be in sic a hurry."

"Hurry," quo' Tam; "dae ye ca' this a hurry? a snail, woman, wad reach the tap as sune."

Although thae were nae mair than thirty feet up as yet, Tam could see by the anxious and waesome looks upward that Tibbie was beginnin' to fag, and I dinna wonner at it; for the way he hurried her alang the streets wad—had it been through the day—hae been considered an act o' inhumanity that deserved severe punishment and exposure.

At this juncture, a swanky birkie in kilts and playin' the bagpipes, wi' aboot a dizzen lads and lasses wi' him, cam' upon the scene. It wad hae been a' vera weel had the twa worthies been continuin' their journey, but thae were actually at a standstill—a ludicrous tableau, verily. There was Tam, face doonwards, haudin' on to the grass wi' his haun's, the left fit firmly imbedded in the earth;

while Tibbie, a yaird below had a guid grup o' his richt ane, the shae o' whilk at every pu' ettled to gie way, for in spite o' Tam's entreaties and cries o' "Haud on lichtly," she insisted on a ticht grip. Had the shae cam' aff—weel, I'd better draw the line at the consequences; at onyrate Tibbie wad hae been the sufferer.

To the inquiries o' the bagpipe chiel, Tibbie informed him as best she could, that thae were on their way to the tap, *and no comin' doon*, as he supposed!

"She'll pe suner at ta fit than ta tap," he jocularly replied; and after a wheen mair words "o' advices," as he ca'd them, the inhuman lot moved on.

The short rest seemed to revive Tibbie wonnerfu', for after the Hielantman and his frien's had disappeared thae again began to ascend, her leddyship takin' the lead, and sae she continued until aboot half way up, when she again gied way, and this time for guid. Tam offered to gang and get help, but she wadna hear tell o't, and naething wad satisfy her noo but to get doon. That, hooever, wasna gaun to be sae easily accomplished.

The guid goon she had on was a consideration, and what she wadna hae damaged even though she should sit whaur she was for a week, sae Tam was in a dilemma.

To carry her was impossible, besides it wad hae caused a crowd to congregate, and recognition micht hae been the upshot, sae there was naething for it but to sit doon and conceive some plan, or wait the issue o' events; and feth he hadna lang to wait, for the rain began to fa', and sune wi' sic a doonpour that until his deein' day Tam'll never forget the expression o' Tibbie's countenance, as she sabbed, "My bannet and guid goon spoil't, wae's me!"

"Serve ye richt, for bein' sae heidstrong, and the suner ye get oot o' here the better for the benefit o' your gaudy display," returned her partner.

The doonpour seemed to arouse Tibbie to a sense o' what she'd be like if she stopt muckle langer, sae gruppin' his airm, she made a stap, and the next meenit Tam dune sundrie revolutions in the air, and felt himsel' stot, stottin' doon the hill like an india-rubber ba'. When he opened his een he was lyin' in bed at hame, and a' bandaged up!

In spite o' his sair banes he speered for Tibbie, and was quietly tauld she was lyin' ben the hoose.

For a meenit or twa Tam thocht, then minded his position on the hill, and Tibbie's unlucky step on the wat grass; the rest? weel, thanks to Hughie, wha stood seriously at the fit o' the bed, for the information whilk I'm in possession o', and whilk sair and a' as my auld cronie Tam undootedly was, I couldna help lauchin' hearty owre when tauld that mornin'.

When Tibbie made the slip and dragged Tam after her thae rowed to the fit o' the hill, and there insensible lay until found by a wheen o' the folk whilk the shower had driven aff Arthur's Seat. Luckily for them Hughie and his Jenny were amang the lave, and in an instant thae were recognised. To get a veekile wasna easy wark at that time in the mornin'; but, thanks to ane o' the feelin'-hearted chiels, it was accomplished at length, and under Hughie's care thae were brocht hame. And wad ye believe it, no' even Mysie Chalmers kens a cheep aboot it, and I hope she never will.

Tam was able to get up that day, and as for Tibbie, it was mair a nervous shock than onything else.

Since then thae've had mony a guid lauch ower't, and although Tibbie's bannet, plyde, and goon's *past redemption*, as she puts it, Tam's no sorry, for it's subdued her at last, and henceforth she'll abide by her guidman's decision in everything.

Tibbie and Tam had a veesit frae Hughie and his sweetheart the ither nicht, and Tibbie actually confess't that she got her DUE—and ye'll a' admit it.

A Munelicht Flittin'.

TECH ay, it's just oot o' the fryin' pan into the fire, in spite o' a' Tam's attempts to keep himsel' oot o' danger. What wad his honoured ancestors hae thocht gin thae had risen frae their lang rest and beheld their lineal descendant concoctin' a munelicht flittin'? The vera thocht o't is eneuch to put anither nail in his coffin —and by this time I'm thinkin' there's a guid wheen. The cause, ye speer—and weel ye may! Extravagance, —Tibbie's extravagance, as I've afore said, wad run ony ane into the manacles o' bankruptcy. "It's easier to bigg twa chimlies than keep twa in coals," was a sayin' o' Tammas MacCrowdie's mither's, and gin Tibbie had taen tent, thae wadna hae been forced to evacuate their position sae unbecomin' as thae did. Hooever, it canna be helped noo, and as I hae a heavy load on my mind, whilk micht be eased by tellin' ye the hale story *verbatim et literatim*, as an auld literary frien' o' mine wad say, I may as weel begin.

Wives and water-mills are aye wantin', and Tibbie's nae exception to the rule, ye'll admit, when ye learn that the auchteenpence whilk Tam's been in the habit o'

gien' her for the hoose rent ilk Saturday for the last three months has been wared withoot his knowledge. Sic doonricht, audacious wastrie is eneuch to mak' his grannie turn in her grave, and I wadna be surprised if Tibbie gets a veesit frae her ghaist afore lang. Brawly she kent—

> "When to spend, when to spare,
> When to buy, and she ne'er was bare."

A lesson whilk mair than oor frien's guidwife wad dae weel to think seriously ower. Deed ay, but auld sparrows are ill to tame, sae it's useless to continue the discourse.

Atweel, Tibbie the ither nicht, atween heartbroken sobs, confessed that the rent money, whilk Tam had been fool eneuch to hand ower to her, was spent, and on sic doonricht trash as nikket baps, nutmegs, cream, and apple jelly. Thae were delicacies for a lang time she'd been in the habit o' takin' to her afternoon tea, and as his sma' pey couldna afford sic, she took the rent money, and noo that the lan'leddy—wha's look at a mile aff wad hae petrified ye—was expected ilka day, it was natural that something had to be dune.

Tibbie, wha was noo deeply affected ower her misconduct, suggested that her guidman ocht to get a loan; but twa shillin's on every pound was interest whilk Tam couldna see the force o' drappin' into the pouch o' Graba', the money-lender, sae as there was nae ither way o' gettin' money, it was agreed that the lan'leddy should be the loser, and that thae'd flit through the nicht!

Andro Elshin, as an auld and trusted frien', was let into the secret, and that worthy at aince opened negotiations

wi' Sandy Mucklebackit for the loan o' his strong cuddy and cart at fourpence an oor, damages included!

Tibbie and Andro's wife had been on the look-oot for twa or three days, but failed to get a hoose to their choice, sae as a final resort thae had to fa' back to the twal-storey ane, whilk Tibbie had a glint at a month or twa syne. Tam wasna pleased wi' this conclusion ava, but as beggars maunna be choosers, and considerin' that every oor was worth it's wecht in gowd—like the haggis—he said naething, but began tyin' up the furniture, sae's the rumlin' o' Mucklebackit's cart wadna shake it to bits, for he'd heard it hinted that the cuddy, poor thing, was gey unsteady under a heavy load.

Andro Elshin suggested that indiarubber on the wheels wad be an improvement—no' only in regard to the furniture, but wad deedin' the soun'. The Netherbow sma'-ware merchant thanked Andro for his hint, and promised to gie it due consideration. That the suggestion had been gien and carried oot lang afore Tam MacCrowdie inwardly prayed, for the noise o' the cuddy and cart gaun alang the street at the deid oor o' the nicht was sure to arouse suspicion, and if thae werena landed in the police-office as a lot o' imposters, it wad be naething short o' a miracle.

The nicht, hooever, cam'; and after weary and anxious waitin' the oor o' ane struck frae St. Giles, and punctual to the time, wi' quakin' hearts, Tibbie and Tam heard the soun' o' the approachin' cart. Stoppin' at the stairfit, thae heard a low whistle three times, whilk thae kent to be Andro's. Liftin' the kist o' drawers on his back, Tam in his stockin' soles, cautiously gaed doon the stair,

expectin' ilka meenit to hear Mysie Chalmer's randy voice shoutin', "Come back and pey the rent," but it was his guilty conscience. Andro Elshin's strength proved o' mair value than his suggestions, for the lifts he carried clean bambazed Tam, and as for Tibbie, I'll gie her credit for accomplishing what I thocht was impossible.

"I think that's a' noo," said Andro, in a whisper, as he scratched his pow and surveyed the furniture, whilk looked as if it had just haen a dynamite shock!

"I hope it's a' richt," said Tam, suspiciously.

"As richt's the mail," returned Andro.

"Ay, but I dinna hauf like the way ye've got the cupboard," put in Tibbie. "If it fa's the glass door'll be smashed to bits."

"There's nae fear, nae fear," asserted Andro; and wi' a "Gee up!" thae started for their new abode, but no' afore Tibbie and Tam took a final look at the auld tenement whaur thae'd spent sae mony happy and miserable days.

Naturally it wasna to be expected that thae were gaun to get ower the journey withoot something happenin' to pey them back for the mean way whilk thae were endeavourin' to escape the lan'leddy and the rent.

To be stopt by some officious nicht-policemen wad hae been justifiable, but the breakdoon o' Sandy Muckle-backit's cart and the total wreck o' the furniture—except the kist o' drawers—was mair than thae had reckoned for!

Thae had just turned the corner o' the street whaur their new hoose was situated, and Tam was aboot to turn roun' to Tibbie, and express the relief he felt at gettin' to

the end o' their journey withoot bein' molested, when an awfu' crash, followed by lood cries o' "Tammas, Tammas!' gar'd my frien' turn quickly roun', and there in the middle o' the street, aboot ten yards behin', lay the cuddy, cart, and furniture on their side; and as for Tibbie, mair deid than alive she was cowpit on to the street, feet first!

The wecht o' the basket o' delf whilk Tam carried on his heid suddenly lost its impressin' influence, and was the cause o' him forgettin' he had sic fragile articles in charge, sae what wi' ill-temper and absent-mindedness the basket slid aff his heid, and in a thousand bits the delf gaed a' ower the pavement!

Tibbie lay speechless wi' amazement at the catastrophe, while Andro, fearin' to waukin' the neebourhood, rushed to the assistance o' puir MacCrowdie, wha by this time was as far gane as the furniture!

It was a ludicrous position, and had it been in the middle o' the day I tremmle at the results. There was naething for't but to get the cuddy on to its feet, put the cart richt, pick up the table and chair legs, the smashed wag-at-the-wa', broken besoms, picture frames, an auld French bed, &c., as best thae could and stow them into the cart again.

"Better if we'd haen Mucklebackit to tak' care o' the cuddy," said Tam to Andro, wha was busy splicin' ane o' the trams o' the cart that had got broken. "This wadna hae happened, I'm certain."

"Ye dinna mean to insinuate that I was the cause o't? Dae ye expect folk to drive a horse and cart fu' o' furniture alang a street at twa in the mornin'—and in hidlin's

—withoot the risk o' comin' to grief," returned the offended Elshin. "Man, there's as mony holes here, gin thae were fu' o' water, as wad droon the hail o' the road trust."

"Ye canna mak' a better o't noo, sae haud your tongue for onysake, and let's get awa' frae here," cried her leddyship. "Hae ye no broken eneuch yoursel' withoot commentin' on ither folk?"

"The fact's admitted, but it was a mistak," retorted Tam.

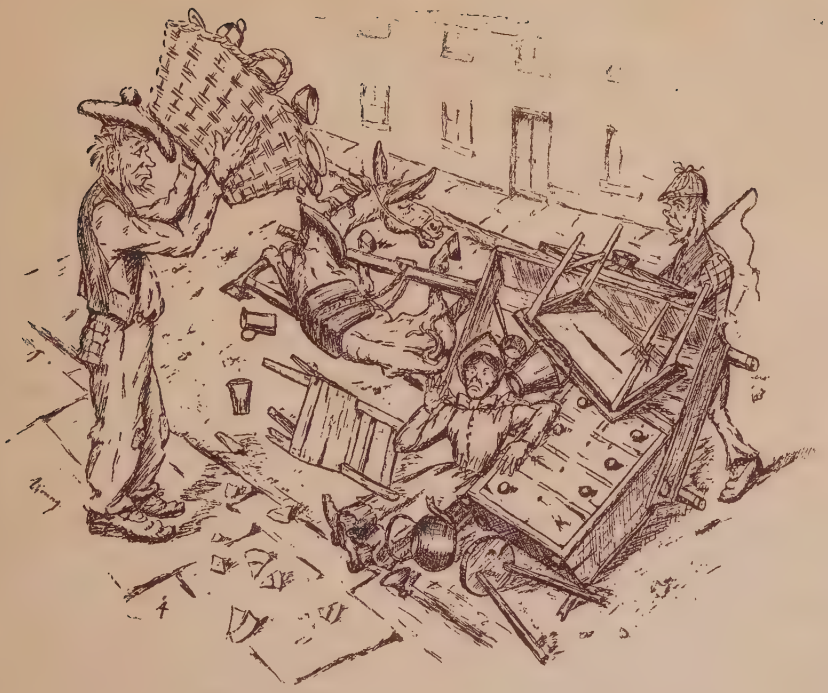
"Atweel, it'll be a mistak' o' the road trust too, sae come awa' and no' aggravate folk," she reiterated.

It wad hae been as weel to hae left the *dèbris* whaur it lay, as it was for nae use noo as furniture, but Tibbie wad insist on them takin't, and consoled hersel' by remarkin', "Ye'll just hae to glue it a' thegither when ye hae time."

This Tam consented to dae *if possible*, and shortly after't thae got the cuddy and cart to the stairfit.

Tam and Andro werena lang in carryin' the pieces up to the hoose, but when thae cam' to the kist o' drawers a new difficulty arose. Sae narrow was the stair that thae could neither get them up the ae way or the ither. After fechtin' till weel on in the mornin,' thae had to gie it up as an impossibility; and Andro, afore gaun awa' wi' the cuddy, suggested thae ocht to break the confounded thing, and tak' it up in bits like the rest.

Gladly his cronie wad hae acquiesced, but the guidwife he couldna get rid o', sae Andro agreed to come back wi' a rope sae's thae could draw them up and in at the window.



A MUNELICHT FLITTIN'.

Wi' this proposition Tibbie was highly pleased, and aff Elshin gaed, leavin' Tam in charge o' the drawers till he cam' back.

This was a task whilk didna suit my frien's taste vera weel; hooever, it had to be dune, and there he sat shiverin' wi' cauld at the stairfit till his cronie returned aboot an oor after't wi' the rope.

"You tak' the rope, Tammas, and gang up to the hoose, syne drap it ower the window, and I'll tie the drawers on doon here," were Andro's instructions, and the next meenit he was up the stair and sune had it danglin' in the air.

Andro sune fixed them below, and to the signal o' "Heave awa'!" Tibbie and Tam got haud o' the rope and began pu'in'.

It was far frae easy wark, but Tibbie put her best fit forrit, and thae were makin' guid progress when—phew! —the wecht left the rope, and suddenly the pair fell wi' a heavy thud on floor, following whilk there was a terrific crash below! There on their backs thae lay until the door was burst open and Andro entered.

Seein' his auld frien's baith lyin' helpless was mair than that worthy could staun', and the next instant he sank among the broken chairs speechless wi' lauchter. That the rope had gien way Tam sune found oot, and that the kist o' drawers in the upgaun had broken aucht panes o' gless he was sune informed by the lood tongues o' the neebors below, wha, when acquainted wi' the facts, gaed awa', on condition that he'd repair the damages withoot delay.

Andro brocht up the drawers in pieces, and thae're in pieces still, wi' the rest o' the furniture.

Ay, it's been a dear flittin' to Tam, and no' only that, but I hear their late lan'leddy's usin' every means to fin' them oot, sae he'll hae to keep a calm soogh. Visions o' a debtor's doom and lan'leddy's ghaists haunt Tam nicht and day, and as a sorrowing heart's aye dry, it's to be hoped he'll no' tak' to the Talisker!

Hughie Elshin's Majority.

"A FISH dinner? Dod! I've been at ane mysel'!" is sure to be the hasty ejaculation o' mony. Noo, to dispute the fact I dinna intend, but, dootless, ye haena witnessed the ludicrous and agonizin' attempts at artistic affectation, no' to speak o' the awfu' affronts Tammas MacCrowdie was subjected to the ither nicht, and whilk it behoves me to relate in as truthfu' a manner as possible.

Hughie Elshin, whase fantastic contortions and mummified manœuvres used to mak' my bluid rin cauld years syne, attained his majority last week, and bein' the only son and heir o' their auld cronie Andro Elshin, in honour o' the event, a wheen kindred speerits resolved on the following Saturday to sojourn to the picturesque and savoury village o' Newhaven, and near the margin o' the briny deep droon the sorrows o' the 'oor. Bein' an auld and respected frien', naturally Tam received an autographic invitation frae Andro the mornin' afore. Noo, ye'll maybe think it strange that MacCrowdie, whase anti-convivial proclivities are sae weel kent, should be sae greatly upset on getting the epistle—but

it's no' to be wondered at when ye learn that his guidwife Tibbie has a nesty habit o' openin' a' his letters, especially the anes marked "private," sae she was cognizant o' the dinner afore himsel'. That he'd hae a strong force o' argumentative assumptions to refute I kent weel eneuch the meenit she cam' into the room, whaur Tam sat busy endeavourin' to solve the intricate problem o' producin' profitable and pioneerin' parliaments! Her broos were doon, her goon sleeves were up, and wi' a look that wad hae petrified a puggie, she exclaimed in a sickly sarcastic voice—"Imphm!—and sae ye're gaun to 'fish' near the haunts o' the dignified and renowned Jean Flucker!"

"Fish?—me fish?—guidsake, what's puttin' that in your heid this mornin'!"

"Authentic facts, Tammas," and thrustin' the invitation in his face, he grabbed it oot o' her haun', and sune mastered the contents.

"Oh, it's a *fish dinner* ye mean," said my frien' wi' great glee, for he jaloused she'd made a mistake.

"A *fule's* dinner's mair liker it; sae ye'll no' gang a fit."

"Hoot, toot, guidwife, ye maunna be sae pernickety, and dictate to your lord and maister like that."

"Maister?—feth! it's little ye maister except a guid ham and egg breakfast on a Sunday mornin,' and an exceptionally heavy supper afore gaun to bed."

"Noo, Tibbie, I admit that my digestive organs are far frae bein' oot o' gear, and I mean to prove it at the fish dinner to whilk I've been sae kindly invited; say nae mair aboot it, and I'll promise to bring something hame that'll surprise ye," said Tam coaxingly.

"Atweel, Tammas, ye hae my permission and can gang this time, but mind and dinna forget the present, whilk I hope'll be something better than *a happenny lucky bag!*"

"Undootedly," said Tam, and wi' a "Mind then," she returned to her hoosehald duties in the kitchen, whilk had been sae abruptly neglected by the cry o' the post-man.

"Guid-be-thankit!" fervently ejaculated Tam, after she had gane. "The woman's getting waur ilka day! Dod! I'll sune no' be able to put my fit ower the lintel. Eh, but I'm henpeckit, sure eneuch, and Tibbie's a vixen; but wait awee, her time's comin'."

That day and throughout the hail o' the next, it's amaist needless to say that the usual mummlin's and irresistible randified remarks reverberated through the room, sae glad was Tam when nicht cam', and he was able to set oot for the favourite howff.

It was only twa meenits past the 'oor appointed when he got there, and wad ye believe it, his auld and respected cronies were busy satisfyin' their hungry appetites when he entered the room in whilk the parasitic praise-a'-performance was to tak' place.

Tam's appearance was the signal for a tremendous oot-burst o' applause, hurrahs, and cries o' "Welcome Mr MacCrowdie!"

This warm ovation, hooever, didna diminish the indignant distraction he felt at the company no' haein' the sense to wait till their frien' turned up to participate wi' them, sae addressin' Andro Elshin, wha augustly acted as croupier, Tam said, "Mr Chairman, I dinna

richtly ken whether to accept your hospitality or no'. (Hear, hear.) I certainly felt gey sma' on coming into this room the noo, and seein' the company to a man tomahawkin' the fish afore them wi' a force and avidity that wad hae dune credit to ony selfish savage. (Richt ye are! and Withdraw the expression.) My conscience says, return to a cheery fire and the wife o' your bosom —(Hear, hear, and The fish is getting cauld.)—but common sense replies, Forgie them, and sit doon," and that Tam did, accepting the proffered seat at the heid o' the table, amid deafenin' applause!

The dinner was sune dune, and after the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were got quickly ower, to the evident satisfaction o' a wheen, the *harmony*, as thae ca'd it, begoud. The professional piano player, whase services had been secured at the expense o' *a free dinner*, and wha, I may here state, is whyles an agent for *smuggled coffins*, first contributed an item in the shape o' "Allister Macallister," enthusiastically feenishing wi' "Tullochgorum."

The chairman's sang was next requested, and on hearin' this Tam quickly slippit oot. Andro Elshin's previous vocal efforts were still vividly impressed on his memory, and as he didna want a repetition o' horrifyin' nicht-mares, he thocht it best to plead sickness and seek the air outside.

When he returned to the room nearly the hail o' the company were on their feet excitedly cryin' for "a pinch at the auld dowg," and Andro was busy haundin' roun' the sneeshin' mull. This time Tam seated himsel' as near the door as possible, in case o' ony sudden emergency,

and richt forment young Hughie, wham thae had a' met that nicht to honour. For the first time in his life he saw that vanity was getting the better o' him. Hughie never was a smoker to Tam's knowledge, yet there he complacently sat puffin' awa' at a penny ceegaur wi' an air o' independent pride befittin' ony lord! Dod, it was rale divertin', and attracted my auld frien's attention until a sword dance was proposed. In an instant the poker and tangs were crossed, and Tam MacCrowdie and auld Elshin were into the middle o' the floor, hoochin' and whirlin' aboot on their taes like mad! Ye speak aboot makin' the rafters ring, but I can tell ye that the tables were cowpit afore thae were dune, and something like a free fecht followed!

After order had been restored, Tam ventured to favour the company wi' the appropriate sang "There's no place like home." Whether it had the desired effect o' soothing his cronies ruptured feelings or no' I dinna ken, but I maun admit that after it was sung the meeting for a while was mair *hamely*, and this Tam for ane was thankfu' for. Thus the time slippit quickly by, and when the auld aicht-day clock in the corner struck ten, Tam MacCrowdie was sole possessor o' the room sae far as consciousness and animation was concerned; and the only way I can account for the strange phenomena is that the *sea air* that nicht maun hae been ower strong for their somewhat delicate hearts.

There are mony new diseases whilk folk gie way to nooadays, that arena in doctor's dockyments, but worthy o' immediate attention nevertheless, sae this was maybe ane

o' them. Of course I charge naething for the information if it's to benefit my fellow creatures.

The sicht o' the company in a state o' semi-usquebaeism was sad to see, but the awkward position Tam was placed in seemed waur. Leave them he couldna, sae awa' he gaed and consulted ane o' the waiters. His advice was, "Get them conveyed hame as sune as possible."

"Richt," said Tam; "but whaur am I to get a conveyance, especially in Newhaven, at ten o'clock on a Saturday nicht? It's oot o' the question a'thegither."

Hooever, he gaed on the search, and as ye'll dootless surmise miserably failed. To the place o' rendezvous after a weary 'oor's trauchle, oor frien' returned wi' the information that naething could be got but a fish hawker's cuddy and cart at the exceptionally large sum o' sax shillin's an 'oor!

"This is makin' money wi' a vengeance," said Tam to the man at the hotel.

"Nae matter, ye'll hae to tak' it, for ye canna mak' an infirmary o' my hoose."

"Oh, great is the inhumanity o' man," muttered Tam to himsel', as he returned to procure the veekile.

In less than an 'oor it was at the hotel door, and wi' the assistance o' the waiter he got the *company* packed in the cart withoot studyin' individual comfort, and takin' his seat beside the driver thae proceeded up the Whale Brae, and reached Edinburgh aboot an 'oor later.

The first halt was made at the hoose o' Andro Elshin, and ye can picture the horror and consternation my frien' experienced on jumpin' to the ground, and lookin' into the cart only to find it *empty!*

At what conclusion to arrive Tam didna ken, but, thanks to the driver, he was sune enlichtened. That worthy, staunin' in the middle o' the street lauchin' like a fule, cried—

"The pin o' the back board o' the cart's cam' oot, and thae've a' *slid on to the street!*"

"What street?" roared Tam.

"Leith Walk; it's gey steep," returned the driver.

Tam MacCrowdie waited to hear nae mair, but rushed to the police office, and was there informed that *a batch o' invalids had just arrived!*

"On what charge?" he excitedly asked.

"Lyin' on the tramway rails, and obstructin' the thoroughfare. Some are lockit doon, and the ithers are aff—to the infirmary!"

Noo powerless to speak, Tam got ootside, tottered hame, and in spite o' Tibbie's tormentin' tongue—thanks to that nicht's bodily exertions—fell soun' asleep!

Next mornin' he was waukened by lood raps, and on gaun to the door beheld the Newhaven waiter, wha instantly demanded three pounds in reparation for the new suit o' black claes whilk was spoilt in carrying oot his frien's, as he asserted, the nicht afore. Tam tried to expostulate, but a' o' nae avail. The noise brocht Tibbie to the door, and sune she gar'd him retreat wi' the besom shank, but no' afore he let a' the folks on the stairheid ken that he was gaun to "file an action for damages!"

Aboot the present Tam promised her leddyship there's no' been a cheep; dootless she thinks he'll hae *ither things* to buy noo; and as for the *company*—weel, their love o' the Talisker, and the subsequent issue o' events may point a moral and adorn a tale!

The Curin' o' Mysie Chalmers.

"HAE mercy on the brute, Tibbie, for onysake," ejaculated Tammas MacCrowdie, the ither nicht, as tired and dowie he entered the hoose. "O'd, the neebors'll think ye're chasteesin' me, for thae screeches are sae natural like." His words, hooever, were unheeded, and ere he got seated doon at the chimla—swish! swish! —again gaed the dishcloot ower the back o' poor Baudrons. "My certie, ye'd better curb your cruelty, or ye'll maybe rue it," and wi' that he wildly drave the horn spune into the parritch coggie.

"Look to your ain tongue, guidman, and ne'er fash your thumb wi' my hoose duties, or it'll be waur for ye," retorted Tibbie. "Beasts as weel as bodies maun be learned manners."

"And what, pray, has the poor brute been daein' noo, if it's a fair question?"

"Daein'! I doot ye'd sune turn up your nose if ye only kent hauf o' its wark. Daein', my certie, it's never dune daein'," said Tibbie. "It's a' vera weel for you that's oot

frae mornin' till nicht, to come hame and see things aye sae cosy, but ye never for a meenit think o' the labour that it's gien me, or the durdums I've haen with the neebors."

"This kind o' argument may be vera weel to ane wha understaun's the basis, but I maun confess that my perceptive faculties are a wee obscure, sae the suner ye speak mair plainer and to the point the better," returned Tam. "What has a' this got to dae wi' the skelpin' o' Baudrons? You're speakin' in riddles, whilk, like the Sphinx o' Egypt's, unsolvable."

"Od, Tammas, ye're surely awfu' anxious to hear as to what gar'd me lick Baudrons sae sair," said Tibbie five meenits after in a reconciled tone o' voice. "I ferlie hoo ye can e'en condescend to tak' notice o' sic a brute, whase theevin' propensities keep the hail neeborhood in perfect dread. Noo, if it only showed breadth o' body for the amount it ilka day manages to steal it wad be naething, but sic a skeleton. Its shadow on the pavement it tries to rin awa'frae; and nae further gane than last nicht Wullie Wing, the bird-stuffer, roun' the corner, offered me half-a-croon if I'd alloo him to keep it sae's to proove to his customers that he could, wi' galvinism, or something or ither o' that name, keep the life even in the banes o' animals."

This was mair than Tam could staun'; for he'd aye a warm side to Baudrons, frae the day he got him when a kittlin', and wha was really a douce, sensible, and as kindly a cat as ye'd find in a day's walk, wi' nae obnoxious ways aboot it.

"Woman! can ye no' see the folk are a' makin' a fool o' ye. Thae'll hae heard o' your ongauns wi' the beast,

and'll be makin' the maist oot o' sma' bulk. Ye're like a' the rest o' your sex, gey bad at the uptak'. Whaur's your wit, eh?"

"Ay, and whaur's your rabbit, whilk's o' mair consequence?"

"Rabbit?" quo' Tam. "What rabbit? The rabbit I bocht this afternoon for the morn's dinner?"

"It's Baudrons that made you a widower o't, and noo ye can let me ken whether I've hidden its theevin' propensities ower lang, or kept the auld tawse frae off its back."

"That Baudrons has taen the rabbit, I dinna for a meenit try to contradict, but it wasna the beast's faut. If ye were foolish eneuch to leave the rabbit in its gait, it serves ye richt. You that's come to this time o' life, and seen sae muckle as ye boast aboot, ocht to hae kent a trick or twa better than that. I say it serves ye richt."

"Serve me here, or serve me there, it's you that'll suffer, guidman, and no' me, sae craw a wee mair crouser," answered Tibbie.

Tam saw it was useless to continue further, sae he quietly supped his parritch, and after a glint at the news gaed to bed.

Next mornin', the craw o' the cock, for ye maun ken a wheen o' thae indispensable midden-monarchs hae their abode in a yaird at the back o' my auld cronie's hoose, waukened him at four.

Noo, this wad hae been a sma' offence, hadna the rest o' the cocks in concert followed suit, and alack! wi' a lang grunt, Tibbie opened her een.

Ye've a' experienced the agonising sensation o' the tooth-

ache, whan ye want to sleep and canna wi' the pain, but the tongue o' a yammerin' woman's just as bad.

Yatter, yatter, yatter aboot the rabbit she wad, in spite o' Tam's entreaties, and ance or twice he ettled to resort to physical power, but luckily for her the idea was abandoned.

That nicht Tam wended his way hame in far frae an easy state o' mind, and when he reached the stairfit, stood switherin' whether to gang up or no', but sune the question was settled, for plainly on his ear fell the swish! swish!! swish!!! and weel he kent Baudrons was the martyr.

Tam was up the stair three staps at a time, and was clearin' the first landin' wi' a jump—for auld and a' as he is, he's yet as soople as a whittrick—when bump against an auld neebor wifie he cam' wi' sic a force that doon the poor creature gaed like a hunnerwecht o' coal.

Dingin' ower an auld woman wudna be a nice thing to hae laid to your charge, sae he passed on withoot e'en lookin' roun', in the hope that in the dark the neebor hadna recognised him; but it wasna to be, for he had scarcely got hauf into the hoose when he felt a haun' on his shouther, and afore he could collect himsel' my frien's heels were daein' sundrie revolutions in the air, and as for his heid, he had sense eneuch to ken it had cam' into contact wi' something no' saft.

After gettin' pu'd to his feet by Tibbie, he explained to the neebor wifie the circumstances, and tendered an apology, whilk was gladly accepted.

The unexpected doonfa', hooever, wasna destined to drive oot o' Tam's mind what he was noo mair than ever

determined to find oot. Sae he accosted Tibbie wi' "What dae ye mean by continually ill-usin' the poor dumb brute? Ye canna say it's no' true, for I heard the cries o' Baudrons at the stairfit."

"I doot, guidman, ye hear mair than what's guid for ye. What say you, Bab?" said her leddyship, addressing that worthy, wha sat at the chimla-lug.

"Atweel, Mistress MacCrowdie, seein' I haena the story frae the foondation, I wadna like to say onything that wad offend Tammas, deed no'! When folk mind their ain affairs thae hae eneuch to dae, and whyles a hantle sicht ower muckle."

"Weel said, Mistress Bowster," retorted Tam, wi' a smile. "That's a paragraph Tibbie ocht to get inserted in her hoose ledger for daily guidance. She'd be sure to mak' by it."

Exasperated at the sudden turn affairs had taen, Tibbie, wi' as disdainfu' a look as Tam beheld for mony a day, gaed to the press, brocht oot an *empty* plate, and wi' a clash that nearly broke the delf in bits flang it upon the table.

"There's your supper, guidman; tak' it, and muckle guid may it dae ye!"

"Supper!" roared Tam.

"Ay, a' that left o' ane at onyrate."

"What! an empty dish?"

"Just that, na; and what's mair, aither I or that brute ye think sae muckle o' 'll no' stay anither nicht under this roof. A hail pound and a half o' guid American beef I bocht this mornin' and put it carefu' in the press till I gaed doon to the back green wi' a wheen duds,

When I cam' back, I couldna believe my een, for the press was open and the beef awa'! Noo, Mistress Bowster, I ask ye hoo am I to staun' sic daily losses as that. Even nae further gane than yesterday a nice sonsy rabbit that cost me aichteenpence at the pouttry market was taen frae my vera nose, and yet his lordship there has the audacity to check me if I even shake my neive at it. Just let Baudrons show face again the nicht, and I'll no' be responsible for his death."

"Weel, as I said afore," put in Bab, "I dinna like to fash wi' ither folks' affairs, but I canna help remarkin' that I dinna believe Baudrons to be the transgressor ava'."

"What! no' the thief?" roared Tibbie. "Tak' care what ye say, my woman; tak' care what ye say. Dae ye mean to insinuate that the buyin' o' the rabbit's a pack o' lees, and I'm hoardin' up the money? Dae ye mean that —say, or as sure as I'm an auld Lawnatarian—and that's nae disgrace—ye'll gang oot o' the hoose wi' less hairs in your heid than what ye cam' in wi'."

"Ye dinna need to bleeze up sae quickly," returned Bowster snappishly, and wi' an independent and haughty toss o' her heid.

"Your richt, Babbie," said Tam; "Tibbie has a nesty habit o' catching folk afore thae fa'."

"Tak' her part, ye insolent fallow that ye are."

"Wheesht, Tibbie; for onysake dinna let your temper get the better o' ye."

"Na, Tammas, it doesna dae; hooever, as I was aboot to remark"—here Bowster drew Tibbie and Tam close thegither, and in a whisper said, "Keep your een on

Mysie Chalmers, your next-door neebor. She had a stewed rabbit to her supper last nicht, and this afternoon I saw her in hidlins dae aboot a pound and a half o' beef! Tak' tent to my words," and wi' that Mistress Bowster opened the door and hirpled doon the stair.

For a wee the pair stood speechless, then said her leddyship—

"I believe what Bab says to be gospel, Tammas. It was easy eneuch for the hypocritical heathen to open the door and tak' the beef while I was doon hangin' oot the claes."

"Ay, but poor Baudrons got the blame o't a' the same; hooever, I'll let that flee stick to the wa'," said Tam, sadly.

"For weeks and weeks back I've ferlied whaur a' my bits o' sape, a kame or twa, and a wheen ither sma' necessities gaed too. Weel eneuch I kent Baudrons couldna steal them; but, thank guidness, I've got an inklin', and noo for a bit o' my mind."

"Ca' canny, Tibbie," returned Tam. "Dae naething hasty, but listen. Just tak' your ways ben to the thievin' limmer's hoose and quietly say till her that a pound and a hauf o' cheap American meat that ye had in the press, and whilk was doctored up wi' prussic acid to kill the mice wha rin aboot the floor at nicht, has been stolen and eaten, ye believe, by poor Baudrons! If this doesna gie her a fricht she'll no' forget in a hurry, my name's no' Tammas MacCrowdie."

Tibbie, ye may be sure, needed nae second biddin'; and lauchin' hearty, Tam sat doon to wait the result. Lang, by my feth, he wasna kept in suspense, Aboot three

meenits after the door was driven wide to the wa', and Mysie, the colour o' death, rushed in, shoutin' and screechin'—"The doctor, Tammas; save me!—save me! It was me that took the meat—I'm pushioned!—save me!"

In twa meenits the hoose was fu' o' neebors, brocht oot wi' Mysie's heartrending cries.

"Haud a guid grip o' her in case she turns mad," said Tam, rising and puttin' on his coat and bannet. "I'll see what a doctor wi' the stammack-pump can dae;" and winkin' to Tibbie, wha seemed to be enjoyin' the fun brawly, he hurried doon the stair and made a ca' on Andro Elshin. The twa auld cronies had a guid hearty lauch at the easy discovery and discomfort o' the next-door neebor. That it wad cure her Andro was deid sure.

Twa 'oors after, Tam got hame, and Tibbie, in smothered lauchter, telt that the neebors had waited for him and the doctor until thae could wait nae langer, and at her suggestion, thae got Mysie ben to her ain hoose and tied doon to the bed sae's she couldna rise and dae ony damage!

Hughie Elshin's Waddin'.

"DEED ay, it's the gate we've a' to gang," as the auld maids say, and Andro Elshin's son is nae exception to the rule.

Great preparations for the auspicious event hae been gaun on for the last sax weeks, and the ither nicht the happy pair were joined in wedlock's haly bond; and wad ye believe it, my auld cronie, Tammas MacCrowdie no' only got an invitation but was asked to perform the honourable duties o' *best* man; altho' saxty-four years auld come Martinmas, the hinmaist day.

Weel, after the minister had bound them thegither, and the health o' the bride and bridegroom drunk ower and ower again, the guests were requested to sit doon to supper, and I may say nane o' them needed a second biddin', especially the birkie frae Balallan, for in his hurry to get a seat opposite ane o' the plates that seemed to hae mair roast beef and tatties on't than the lave, he dang ower Hughie's granny—poor body!—wha was sae bad wi' rheumatics that it was hauf an 'oor afore thae managed to get her to her feet again.

Tam was beginin' to jalouse that naething but hydraulic power wad lift her.

Eventually the guests managed to get seated doon; and after a grace, whilk I'm inclined to think was the Selkirk ane, thae started and dune fell justice to warm dainties.

Rather free comments were passed, but their *foreign* frien', whase faut undootedly it was, peyed attention to what was afore him, and naething else.

"That's Rab Ha' to a T.," quo' Benjie Blaidry.

"Wheesht," returned Tam. "There'll be some fun here afore the nicht's ower wi' that same birkie."

"I dinna doot it, Tammas," returned Benjie; "for Hughie's e'ein' him wi' sic a witherin' look that I'm beginning to think he's fidgity on't; but wha's yon lassie he's tryin' to haud up to?"

"I declare if it's no' Tibbie's sister's dauchter's bairn. She'll manage him or my name's no' MacCrowdie."

What thae ca'd the second and third course followed, and after the table had been cleared a sang was socht frae Hughie, wha sune favoured them wi' "Woo'd and married and a'," and to the encore, "My wife's a winsome wee thing!"

Then thae had the bride's sang aboot "A braw wooer," wha I doot was Hughie, "comin' doon the lang glen."

Tam, as best man, was next expected to dae something great, but, as usual, he had an unco bad cauld, and couldna undertak' his favourite, "The deil's awa' wi' the exciseman." Tibbie, hooever, seemed to be after some freak or anither, for winkin' ower to the *foreign* birkie she begoud, "Whistle and I'll come to ye my lad;" in

response to whilk the Balallan guest started, "She says she lo'es me best o' a'."

It's needless to say that sic an open confession, and afore sae mony, was mair than Tam MacCrowdie could thole, sae in the heat o' passion he had a grup o' the smirkin' chiel by the craig afore ane o' the company could interfere, and the next meenit thae were on the floor, wi' the side table and a' the refreshments for the after part o' the nicht on the tap o' them!

The wark o' extricatin' the twa frae the *debris* wasna accomplished afore the folk below were up thunnerin' at the door for admittance, and at their back a policeman.

"This noise had better be put a stop to at ance," said the sweep frae below. "And what's mair, ye'll hae to pey for the pictures and delf."

"Mr Policeman," said the sweep's wife, referrin' to that worthy dignitary o' the law, wha stood e'ein' the whusky wi' a watery mou,' "I canna, and wunna staun' it! My man has to rise at three in the mornin' to his wark, and maun hae sleep. Thae've danced sae muckle and wi' sic a vengeance that I've haen to rise four times frae a warm bed to haud up the roof. Noo, this wad be naething, but when it comes to the breakin' o' pictures and a sax years' savin' o' delf lyin' in bits on the floor, it's high time sumething was dune!"

Andro Elshin, after this randified speech, tried to expostulate wi' the enraged wifie, but a' to nae purpose; sae Tam watched an opportunity, and winkin' to the policemen, he put in his tongue.

"It'll pe a' richt, mistress. Shist gang yer wa's doon

to yer ped and she'll see that there's nae mair hoochin' ta nicht."

"But what aboot my broken dishes? Am I to loss a' through their dauft on-gauns?"

"She'll see that thae're peyed pack ta morn," whilk effectively soothed the wifie below, and after a dram a' roun' thae gaed awa'.

Something like order was noo restored, and wi' Tougal's presence there was less singin' and "nane hoochin'," as he expressed it. Every twa-three meenits the tappit hen gaed roun', whilk seemed to meet wi' oor new arrival's approbation sae muckle that he took aff his lang tile hat, and richt or wrang wad gie the following verse—

"Nainsel' frae the Highlands she cam',
The bonnie braw Lowlands to saw;
But it wasna wi' pipe or wi' drum
She wad march frae her country awa'.
'Twas just wi' the pipes playin' merry,
She steppit the heather amang;
A drap usquebagh made her cheery,
And she kept up her heart wi' a sang.
Oh, the Highlands sae grand,
And oh, the Lowlands sae braw;
But mony guid things in the Highlands,
The Lowlands the like never saw."

This was followed by lood applause, although inwardly, I believe, the hail o' the company was glad it was ower.

The Balallan chiel, wha, as Hughie's mither remarked at the time, was gaun staggerin' aboot frae side to side like a marrionette feegure, wi' the evident intention o' fechtin' some ane or ither, but nane wad tak' the hint, sae no' to be ootdune he got haud o' Jenny roun' the neck, and the twa gaed clyte doon on a seat at the side

o' the noo hauf-on Tougal, wha barely escaped bein' ca'd aff his legs!

This was meant, Tam could see; but that wasna the warst o't, for when the pair got on their feet, there, to the horror and consternation o' a', was the policemen's tile hat as flat as a flounder, and for a' the warl' resemblin' that musical instrument they ca' the concertina.

Here was a dilemma. What could the poor chiel dae? was the problem that the hail o' the company tried to solve, but a' to nae purpose.

At this juncture, and to mak' the mishap mair ludicrous, Tougal stapt the battered hat on his fiery red heid, and was into the middle o' the floor daein' a hielant war dance wi' a force o' speerit and gusto indescribable.

After he had desisted, Andro Elshin ventured to speer hoo he wad get oot o' the mess.

"Oot ta mess? fat (hic) mess?" he jocularly reiterated.

"This," said Andro, liftin' his heid gear.

"Oh, she'll pe (hic) promoted for this. Great struggle (hic) wi' (hic) a purglar, and felled to ta grund (hic) wi' ta jimmy!"

At this quickly concocted story o' his bravery, whilk was to be telt to "ta sergeant," a' lauch't heartily, syne prepared to leave, as it was weel on in the mornin'.

As to whether the sergeant really believed the hielant rascal's lees I never richtly heard, and as for the sweep's wife below gettin' her dishes and pictures replaced, I doot she never did; but I'm no' dune wi' the policeman yet.

That mornin' when the waddin' party were comin'

awa' it was discovered that Tougal and Benjie Blaidry were in sic a hie state o' *speeritual* excitement that to move them wad hae been injurious to their health, and waur still, a nuisance to the calm tranquillity o' the neeborhood, sae the twa were left—the policeman at the ae side o' the kitchen fire and poor Benjie at the ither, uphaudin' the jamb wi' his heid.

In this position it seems that thae sat till daylicht, when the policeman awoke, and to his great astonishment discovered twa bottles o' Talisker.

Waukenin' Benjie, he cried, "You tak' ta tane, I'll tak' ta tither," whilk I need scarcely say was dune wi' pleasure. Blaidry, to his credit be it said, wasna sae frien'ly wi' the mountain dew this time as Tougal, and shortly after't he saw the propriety o' getting awa' hame; but what was to be dune with the hielantman? for noo he couldna staun' on his feet! To desert even a policeman in the time o' need was a crime that Benjie Blaidry wadna be charged wi', sae he sent for assistance in the shape o' a machine to tak' them alang.

After muckle difficulty the driver succeeded in getting the twa inside, and was driving rapidly to the address gi'en when an incident happened whilk was destined to cause muckle commotion. A'thing gaed weel eneuch for a part o' the journey, owin' to the occupants being asleep, but in turnin' a corner ower hasty the veekile gied a jolt whilk, unfortunately, waukened baith. Benjie, dumfounner't, forgot whaur he was, and staggerin' against the door o' the machine, whilk in the hurry hadna been richt sneck't, the next meenit he was lyin' a' his length on the street.

Tougal seein' his frien' step oot sae quickly, thocht he'd dae the same, sae with difficulty he bauldly made a stap, and as he afterwards described it—"ta causey-stanes cam' up and struck her on ta face!"

The ridiculous appearance o' the drucken policeman and Benjie lyin' on the public street sune drew a crowd, and as nane o' the twa could speak, it was thocht advisable to tak' them to the Infirmary.

Blaidry on the way managed to come to his senses, and was able to gang hame, wi' hunners following at his back, for the torn and dilapidated sicht o' him was a cure for sair een!

Tougal, when he cam' to, fand himsel' strappit doon to a bed in the Infirmary, and his airms in slings!

A month or twa after't Tougal cam' oot, but didna get the promotion he expected, sae resigned; and to this day has, I'm telt, his crushed tile hat framed and hingin' on the wa' o' his hoose, as a lasting memento o' Hughie Elshin's waddin'!

J. T. BAILLIE, PRINTER, 5 NICOLSON SQUARE, EDINBURGH.

PRESS NOTICES

OF

SCOTS POEMS AND BALLANTS,

BY J. WILSON M'LAREN.

The National Observer.

"The verses, which are mainly in dialect, have fancy, humour, and much common-sense."

The Scotsman.

"The 'poems' and 'ballants' show that besides possessing the fire of patriotism and faith in human nature, Mr M'Laren has no small command of the Scottish dialect, and of pawky humour and insight into national character. Other pieces display a decided power of pathos—instance 'The Wa-gaun o' the Wean,' 'The Wee Orphan Laddie;' and in lines like those of 'The Country Idyll,' and the 'Lass o' Logan Lee,' and 'A Screed to Hugh Haliburton,' he displays genuine knowledge of, and sympathy with native and country life."

The Pall Mall Gazette.

"The unique character of the volume has evoked well-merited praise; and one of the songs, 'Shouggie shou, my Bairnie,' in the book has already been set to music by Mr Henschel, the well-known composer.

The Bookman.

"Marked by sincerity and humour. The result is in the highest degree creditable to Mr M'Laren as a craftsman no less than a verse-maker."

The Glasgow Herald.

"A handsome volume of 'Scots Poems and Ballants,' by J. Wilson M'Laren, will be welcome to those who remember his 'Rhymes frae the Chimla-Lug.' The result is highly creditable. His songs and ballads are written in Scottish doric, with here a touch of pathos and there a gleam of humour, and afford a great deal of characteristic reading. The airs that blow through Mr M'Laren's verse are fresh and wholesome."

The Dundee Advertiser.

"From a literary point of view the volume is highly creditable to the author. Since he gave to the world his 'Rhymes frae the Chimla-Lug,' he has greatly developed the poetic faculty, and the present volume amply verifies the prediction then made, that if spared to maturer years he would add something more praiseworthy than his maiden venture to the song-poems of his country. The poems as a whole are marked by simplicity and freshness of expression, and by something of the tender pathos and genuine humour of our national poet. The writer possesses the faculty of hitting off in a sprightly and humorous style the foibles of humanity. He delineates manners more than passions, and one must be at home both in the language and manners to appreciate the skill and quiet archness with which he heightens the display of rustic character without giving it vulgarity, and refines the view of peasant life by touches of sweetness and tenderness without departing in the least degree from its simplicity. . . . The volume is indeed another reminder that, though a number of our songs are due to the educated and even the noble of the land, the great bulk of them has emanated from the people themselves whose hearts have been stirred by them—the peasant and artisan in humble life."

The Weekly Citizen.

"The poems possess much poetic merit. The reflective author has been by turns inspired by the beauties and grandeur of nature, as when he sings of 'A Summer-Day Dream,' and discourses of the wrathful sea that ceaselessly beats upon the cliffs at Dunnotter. Or he is moved by strong individuality of character. Pathos and humour succeed each other with charming variety in this pleasant volume."

The Scottish Typographical Circular.

"Mr M'Laren has produced a work that is creditable to him as a poet as well as a printer. It is no ordinary book—it has a character all its own, and bears the impress of the author stamped on it in a way which few books before if any, have ever had. The book is charming to look at, printed in handsome style on hand-made paper, with wide margin and rough edges, and daintily bound in half-parchment. The bulk of the volume is made up of Scots poems, in which, without doubt, the author is most successful, for his command of the doric is perhaps unequalled."

The Glasgow Evening News.

"The author has achieved a beautiful volume, with a distinction all its own, which even publishers of the foremost rank might be proud to issue."